

OFFICIAL UK

ISSUE 65

PlayStation Magazine

WORLD EXCLUSIVE REVIEW!

TOMB RAIDER CHRONICLES

LARA FIRES HER PARTING SHOT ON PS1! DOES SHE GO OUT WITH A BANG? FIND OUT INSIDE!

PS2 LAUNCH!

The facts, the future, the reviews... We reveal all in a 22-page myth-busting special!

FINAL FANTASY IX

Square up to our exclusive UK first play!

MEDAL OF HONOUR UNDERGROUND

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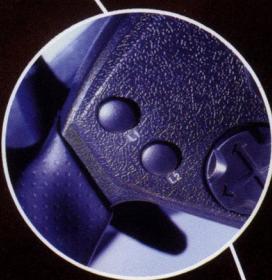
REVIEW ROMP

TOMB RAIDER CHRONICLES
 MEDAL OF HONOUR: UNDERGROUND
 DIGIMON WORLD
 SPYRO 3: YEAR OF THE DRAGON
 THIS IS FOOTBALL 2
 PRINCE NASEEM BOXING
 JUNGLE BOOK GROOVE PARTY
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There's a beast lurking within these pages. A monster we created ourselves. It starts on page 60, ends a massive 22 pages later, and is our

all-consuming PlayStation 2 launch feature that finally lays bare Sony's killer app.

It almost killed us. It was worth it though. We've scoured the Earth for answers to every last PS2 question we've been asked ("Does PS1 play PS2 games?" Er, no), sucked the best Sony brains dry to find out how the thing works and invalidated our warranty taking one apart. We wanted to bring you the full PS2 monty inside and out, so if you're wondering what it looks like naked, flip to page 62.

The first OPM PS2 reviews start on page 76. *Tekken Tag, Ridge V...* the prospect is pant-watering, though they could never live up to the hype. Mostly they're old favourites decked out in shiny new polygon outfits. But bear in mind, the launch titles represent the first stab at PS2 game design.

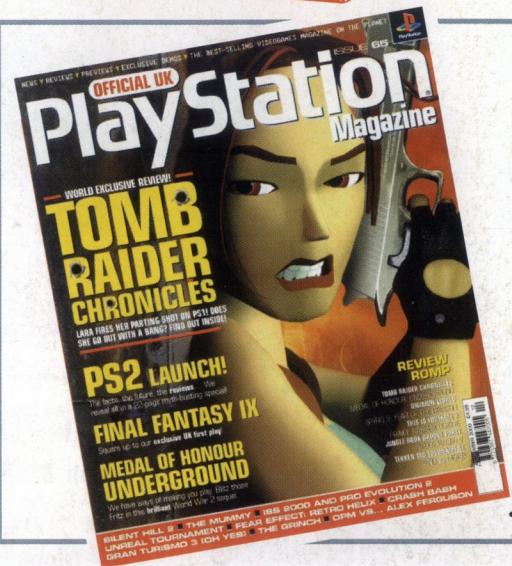
Strangely its still PS1 titles that are knocking us dead. Without graphical camouflage to fall back on, developers have no option but to turn up the gameplay. Which explains *Tomb Raider Chronicles*. We thought Lara should have hung up her shooters last time but Core has pulled it out the bag. The review on page 102 explains all.

Finally, I'd like to say goodbye to OPM's longest-serving team member, dashing art ed Milford Coppock. He'll be much missed.

Anyway, who's for some TRC?

Mark Donald (Editor)

OFFICIAL EXCLUSIVE!



COVER STORIES



Tomb Raider Chronicles 102

Is Lara dead? She doesn't look like a gonna to us. Check out our exclusive review to find out why



PS2 Uncovered 060

Inside and out, we've got PlayStation 2 completely covered - over 22 pages



Final Fantasy IX 028

Exclusive first play of the final *Fantasy* on PS1, plus interviews with the makers and a look at the future



Crash Bash 046

The loveable bandicoot goes bonkers in the wildest game of the year



Medal Of Honour Underground 106

Prequel to the fantastic WW2 shooter is finally here, we put it in the firing line in our huge review



Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2 094

Keep scraping your knee instead of notching up the points? Let our fantastic tips help

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TURN OVER NOW!



page 028

Reality O Fantasy 9

It's the final *Fantasy* on PS1 and we've played it. Take a look...

BLUEPRINTS

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| Fear Effect 2
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| Prepare for flashback as the futuristic thriller's past is revealed | | |
| The Mission | | 038 |
| The game of that advert with Edgar Davids and those samurai robots. We no lie | | |
| Rainbow Six
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Now we are nine, is this still the greatest videogame series ever? We have an exclusive play of the PAL version, talk to everyone who matters from Square, and show you exactly what you're waiting for



"PS2 is in position to harness the imminent entertainment explosion"

Fact: The Official UK PlayStation Magazine is the world's best-selling videogames magazine. The only magazine with an official demo CD each and every month, OPM is also the only magazine to offer a unique original magazine on the shelves. This market-leading position means that we can review games honestly and protect our readers' interests, giving real opinions rather than compromise our views in pursuit of an exclusive review or cover.

OPM is the only magazine which really matters within the PlayStation industry for one reason - what we print is the truth. Whether it's about games, the industry or all things PlayStation, our writing is opinionated, honest and always informed. Links with Sony provide exclusive information and game demos, but do not compromise our editorial stance. OPM is 100 per cent editorially independent - guaranteed.

OPM is written in an adult, entertaining manner. Free from technical jargon, but with the necessary expertise that PlayStation owners demand. OPM drops the usual in-jokes and infantile humour for quality. We tell you the latest news, talk to the most important people in the industry, discuss the most relevant issues and review the most exciting games on the planet. And with our demo disc, we let you play exclusive levels from the best PlayStation games before they hit the shelves. OPM: the world's best-selling videogames magazine. Fact.



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NOW!

page 102

Tomb Raider Chronicles

You can't keep a good girl down... Even when she's dead

REVIEWS

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Only a closed
CD case stands
between you
and the world
of PlayStation



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CRASH BASH

Playable

Two complete levels of multiplayer madness from this marsupial-led, mini-game frenzy. Go on, indulge

PRINCE NASEEM BOXING

Playable

Sock it to the Prince in our three-round scrap

SPYRO: YEAR OF THE DRAGON

Playable

Not one, not even two, but three whole stages from the best platformer to leap its way on to PlayStation

TOCA WTC

Playable

Drive yourself crazy with this top-notch racer

JUNGLE BOOK GROOVE PARTY

Playable

Trip the light fantastic in this amazing dance sim

THIS IS FOOTBALL 2

Playable

See if SCE's latest signing would be first on your team sheet in this feast of football action

THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH

Video

No? Then how about seeing what 007's been up to?

MUPPET MONSTER ADVENTURE

Video

Robin the frog comes over all gruesome. Spooky

KOUDELKA

Video

Scare yourself silly with this gothic horror RPG

MAT HOFFMAN'S PRO BMX

Video

Grind your pegs in anticipation of this gnarly ride

MONSTER RANCHER

Video

Here are some beasts our CDs made earlier

DOWNLOADS

• SILENT HILL

Access the special Next Fear Mode!

• KURUSHI

• WIPEOUT 3

TURN TO
PAGE 147
NOW!



A SNEAKY PEEK AT THE FUTURE OF PLAYSTATION – AND BEYOND...

HIGH FLYER

- Ⓐ The future of interactive gaming?
- Ⓑ Sony's secret projects
- Ⓒ Pop-up video
- Ⓓ Come fly with me...

Is there no end to the madness spilling from the minds of Sony's R&D teams? The latest offering, fresh from Dr Richard Marks of SCEA, is a way of interacting with objects on screen in real time. *OPM* recently got a chance to sample this yet-to-be named innovation

Clutching a bright blue plastic stick that looked suspiciously like a toy light sabre, *OPM* found itself standing in front of a TV showing a cartoon cauldron boiling with bubbles. Apparently the 'sword' in our hand could directly control a little blade that popped up on-screen. Sure enough, a few tentative stabs at the screen made the rendered sword dance around mimicking our movements. So far so good, but what made it better was that each time the blade 'hit' the bubbles pouring from the pot, they'd bounce off and dip back down. True interaction.

So how does it work? Surprisingly it's relatively simple. "We just took a cheap Web camera and plugged it into PlayStation 2's USB socket," explains Paul Holman of Sony R&D, "then we got hold of some code that we'd used for an earlier tech demo and wrote a simple driver that enabled the camera to recognise objects' movement." Swapping the sword for a blue stick skewered with a bright orange plastic football, we found ourselves in control of a morning star. The spiked ball whipped around as the stick was shaken, scattering bubbles.

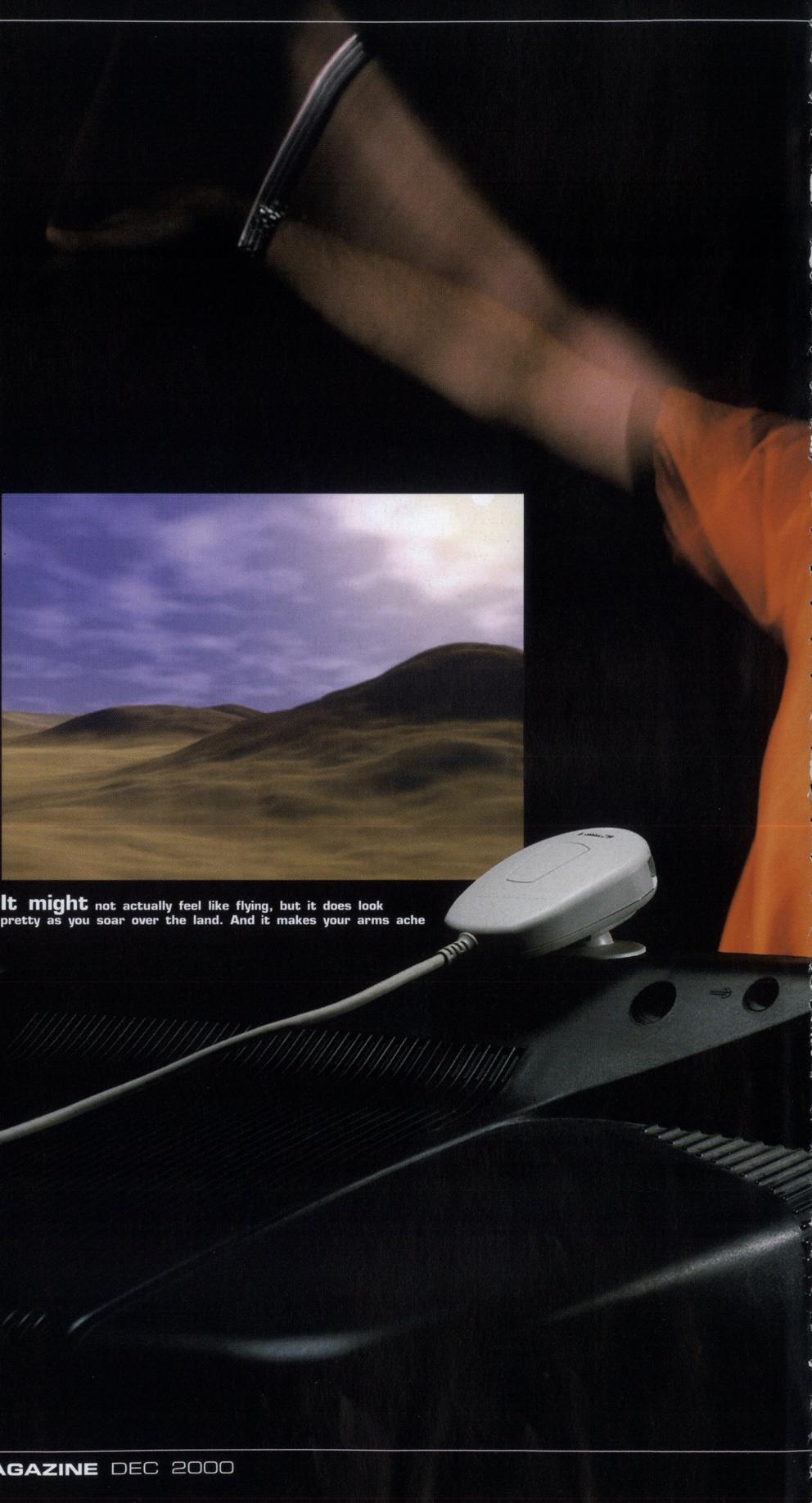
"The camera looks specifically for shapes and colours," continues Paul, "Once it picks up on the image, it works kind of like blue screen (the same technology Michael Fish uses to put clouds on the map) but it remembers your position in one frame, then recognises the movement between frames."

While it's only intended to show developers what's possible, in theory this technology could be implemented in games very soon, as it requires nothing more than the camera and a few bits of brightly coloured plastic to work.

The second feature, tentatively named the 'flying' demo on the grounds that it revolved around, um, flying, opened with a huge green swathe of land. *OPM* took up position in front of the camera with arms held aloft mimicking the wings of a bird. As we began to 'flap', the screen shifted and the camera began to soar across the landscape. The harder we flapped, the faster the 'bird' flew. This was a free-roaming area too – spreading our arms wide and dropping our shoulders to the left made the camera bank sharply to the left. When we stopped moving, the bird began to drop to the point where you could see the shadow of a giant eagle rushing across the landscape. Of course, it begged the question: what would happen if you just dropped your arms? We did try, but sadly it ended in tragedy. Within a matter of seconds, our virtual bird stoved into the ground and the screen faded to black.

The possibilities for next-gen shooters or flying games are endless. So will the future see us flapping around the futuristic tracks of *Wipeout 8?* Er, hope not. ■

Dan Mayers



A GLIMPSE OF THE FUTURE



Also included in the tech demo was the morning star and sword, both of which could interact with any of the on-screen items.



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FEEDBACK

THOSE WHO RANT AND CURSE WHILE SWIGGING DOWN THE PUB, SHUT YOUR TRAP AND DROP US A LINE GIVING US THE RUB OF YOUR ARGUMENT



EDITED BY

Lee Hall, OPM's dazed and confused staff writer.
 Mail us them queries, questions and comments at
 opm@futurenet.co.uk



UNDER REVIEW

Although I generally agree with all your review scores and points of view, I have to disagree with you on *FFVIII* – is it really as good as *FFVII*? It is shorter, though more difficult, than its predecessor. The battle system is far worse – by disc two your GFs are so powerful, fights become a formality – and only one in three moves are attacks. *FFVII* has more (and better) sub-games, and its story is event, rather than character, led.

I feel your reviewer jumped in head-first and was dazzled by the character graphics without realising how much poorer the gameplay was. (The same thing happened with *Tomb Raider IID*. *FFVII* is by far the superior game, and with *FFIX* on the way, we

TEMPTED BY THE FRUIT OF ANOTHER

I have pre-ordered a PS2 because of the high specs and DVD, etc. Is this going to be the last console I buy? I doubt it. But is the PS3 really possible? Having read *OPM63*, the GSCube looks fantastic. But how good can it get, and can the developers write software to fulfil the potential of the infamous Emotion Chip? The consoles of the future will have to be flawless as our tastes get better, but can this happen? Am I going to be tempted into buying a rival next-generation console in 2001 or 2002, or will I hang out for the PS3? Sony, my trust (and cash) is in your hands.

Peter Smith
 Merseyside

PS3 is years off but inevitable. It will push gaming forward in line with technological advances. Things will only stop when our desire for new technology is exhausted, which is clearly never going to happen.

WHY ISS?

The Sony PlayStation exploded into my life four years ago, and ever since I have fallen in love with some brilliant games, particularly the *ISS Pro* series. I loved *ISS Pro '98*, and I was amazed by the even greater improvements made by *ISS*



GSCube (right) is PlayStation's future, although with a few more curves

have to ask if these latest installments are really living up to the legend.

Duncan Leigh
 Blackburn

Opinions, opinions Duncan. But remember, games can still be great despite their little imperfections.

STAR LETTER

FALLING IN LOVE AGAIN...

Farewell, old friend. I remember it well...

The morning of the PlayStation launch. I catch the train into town and arrive as the shop is opening. The excitement, the anticipation. I go straight to the PS bay and bask in the wonder that is before me. Those all-important first games – which one to choose? Well, I have to have *Wipeout*, and I need a good beat 'em up, so *Toshinden* it is. I go to the counter and gladly hand over my £400.

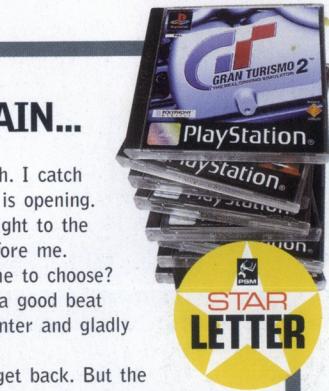
Now to get home! I am so eager to get back. But the annoyance of walking! One foot in front of the other, then the other, then... oh, come on! This is taking too long! I feel nervous, hoping that no thief will realise the box of wonderment that I have in my bag. After what seems like an age, I reach home.

Rip, tear, yank... What's this paper? Oh, it's the instructions... IT'S GETTING IN THE WAY! Where's the bloody aerial socket? FUMBLE, FUMBLE, CLICK... WHIRL. It has started. What a cool start-up – the PlayStation logo. Then *Wipeout* begins. The intro starts.

OH MY GOD! This is like nothing before. No blue hedgehogs, no big-nosed plumbers – this has style, atmosphere and respectability. I can't help giggling with excitement and joy. This is mine! ALL MINE!

So it went from there and, although I now use my PlayStation about as often as Mark Donald has a haircut, I have respect for it. For not even the mighty PlayStation 2 will give me what that little grey box has.

Matt Owen
 e-mail



STAR LETTER



Nobody has died. The great games haven't stopped coming, and I'm sorry to tell you that a bundle of the best games on the planet are on their way to you right now, Mr Owen. It is fine to be nostalgic. We all shed a tear of joy when we heard the 'bwoar, tinkle' as the machine first started up. We miss that feeling too, but in place of the awe has come an appreciation of technically sound and, dare I say it, 'fun' games. And those are just the sort of games we are continuing to see on the trusty PlayStation. You were converted once, Matt, so open your heart and don't lose faith. Dust your machine down, kiss it and bring back good memories with new games such as *Alien Resurrection*, *Tony Hawk's 2* and *Driver 2*. I challenge you not to fall in love again.

Lookin' good. PS1 (above) is still inspiring the greatest games

gameplay
 THE GATEWAY TO GAMES

Every month the sender of the Star Letter will receive copies of the top ten PlayStation games, courtesy of gameplay.com

LETTERS

► *Pro Evolution*. But when I saw *Millennium* in *OPM63*, I was shocked and I threw the mag down in disbelief. The first thing I thought was: why? Why attempt to change the PlayStation version for a mix of *FIFA* and the N64's *ISS*?

Simon
Nottinghamshire

Pick your mag up and rest your aching head, Simon. As you will have seen in *OPM64*, there'll be a sequel from the *Pro Evolution* team some time around March. We will definitely keep you posted, not least because rumour has it that *Pro Evolution 2* is shaping up to be the best football game ever.

KILLER QUEEN

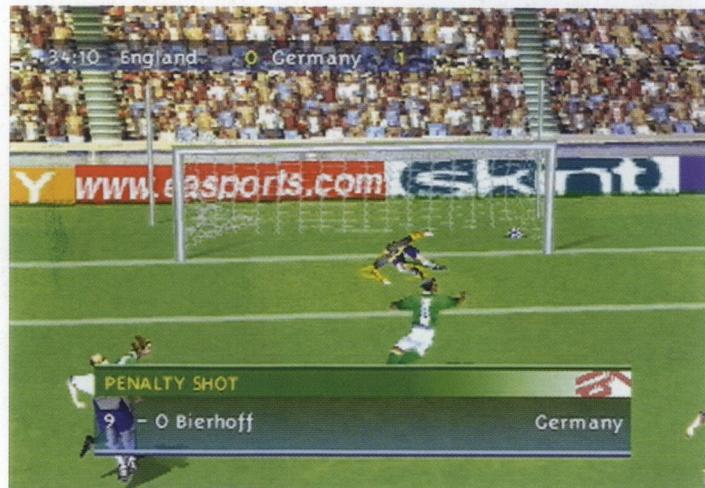
If anybody is looking for a serious challenge on *Vib Ribbon*, I suggest they use Slipknot's *Spit It Out* or Marilyn Manson's *Kiddie Grinder* or *User-Friendly*. The results look like something from a torture chamber! Oh, and when is *FFIX* coming out? I can't wait to get it! I think anybody who actually believes that violence in games rubs off on gamers should be shot with a machine gun and then blown up with a rocket launcher while being eaten by zombies.

Chloe
e-mail

FFIX is due in February next year. I hope this news doesn't make you do anything rash.

BURNING ISSUE

Your magazine is awful. If I ever see it on the shelves of my local newsagent again it will be 20 billion years too soon and I will burn it. The reason? I was reading through a back issue and discovered it



"Goal!" Another net-buster on *FIFA 2000* – and all because of that pesky licence?

"I think anybody who actually believes that violence in games rubs off on gamers should be shot"

contained a review of *Ace Combat 3*. When I found the page I couldn't believe the score. Three out of ten! You seem to think that all missions are the same, I think not. I own the series and think that *Ace Combat 3* is one of the best simulations around.

Angry Reader
Bedford

When you say you 'own the series', are you the guy that actually owns the rights to the name, which would explain a lot, or are you one of the seven people unfortunate enough to own this drivel?

LARA-LIKE

As you can see, I bear a striking resemblance to Lara, as most people around me keep saying. However, various agencies are not doing me much good, so I thought I'd cut out



FEEDBACK EXTRA

MORE ISSUES MOPPED UP BY THE OPM FEEDBACK TISSUE

Stephen Porch of Glasgow writes to "threaten" us "politely" because he has "entered almost every competition". Has he won anything? "No. Yes, that's right, no." By way of protest, he has "put a bomb under the toilet..." Aaron Page (aged eight) writes in with a suggested combo for *Tony Hawk's*. He

eloquently begs us to get back to him, claiming, "Reply or I will eat my hamster." Skewers for your hamster kebab are on their way, Aaron... Jonathan Aitken (the Jonathan Aitken?) so regrets selling his PlayStation he's going to buy a PSone and *Smackdown 2* (perhaps he sold it to pay off *The Guardian*).

As for rival consoles? "I wouldn't spit on them if they were on fire," he splutters. James Horner of Coventry is concerned that games consoles are getting "too powerful". A case of overestimating the power of PlayStation? Andrew Farrell (from some place no one's ever heard of) commits an outrageous gaffe, writing, "I would like to commemorate you on your wonderful and honest game reviews". Oi! We're not dead yet, my lad.

the middle man and show you my... face! My portrayal of Lara is accurate, believable and fun!

Caroline Allott
Barnsley

Angelina Jolie watch out! Anyone need a *Crash Bandicoot* lookalike?

VIVA FIFA

The argument over *FIFA* and *ISS* has a simple answer. Electronic Arts' designers have less time to spend on their games because they need to know who has been promoted and relegated, and which kits and new signings have just changed the face of football. *ISS* doesn't have correctly named players and teams so its designers have more time to work on gameplay. Perhaps that's why it's so easy to score in *FIFA*.

Will Hill
Kent

FIFA games come out very frequently, often with seemingly superficial changes or insignificant gameplay tweaks. Often we get little more than a season update or a chance to play a certain tournament – an update disc would generally do but would be less profitable.

All letters are presumed to be for publication unless marked otherwise. We reserve the right to edit letters for reasons of space and style. We cannot answer letters personally.

Write Us!

Write us here with your Feedback missives, Readers' Charts, Booty entries, It Should Be A Game ideas and, well, anything else. Also check out our shiny new space site at www.dailyradar.co.uk



Playing *Tony Hawk's* can seriously affect your appetite for hamsters

With Solo you can buy
all sorts of things

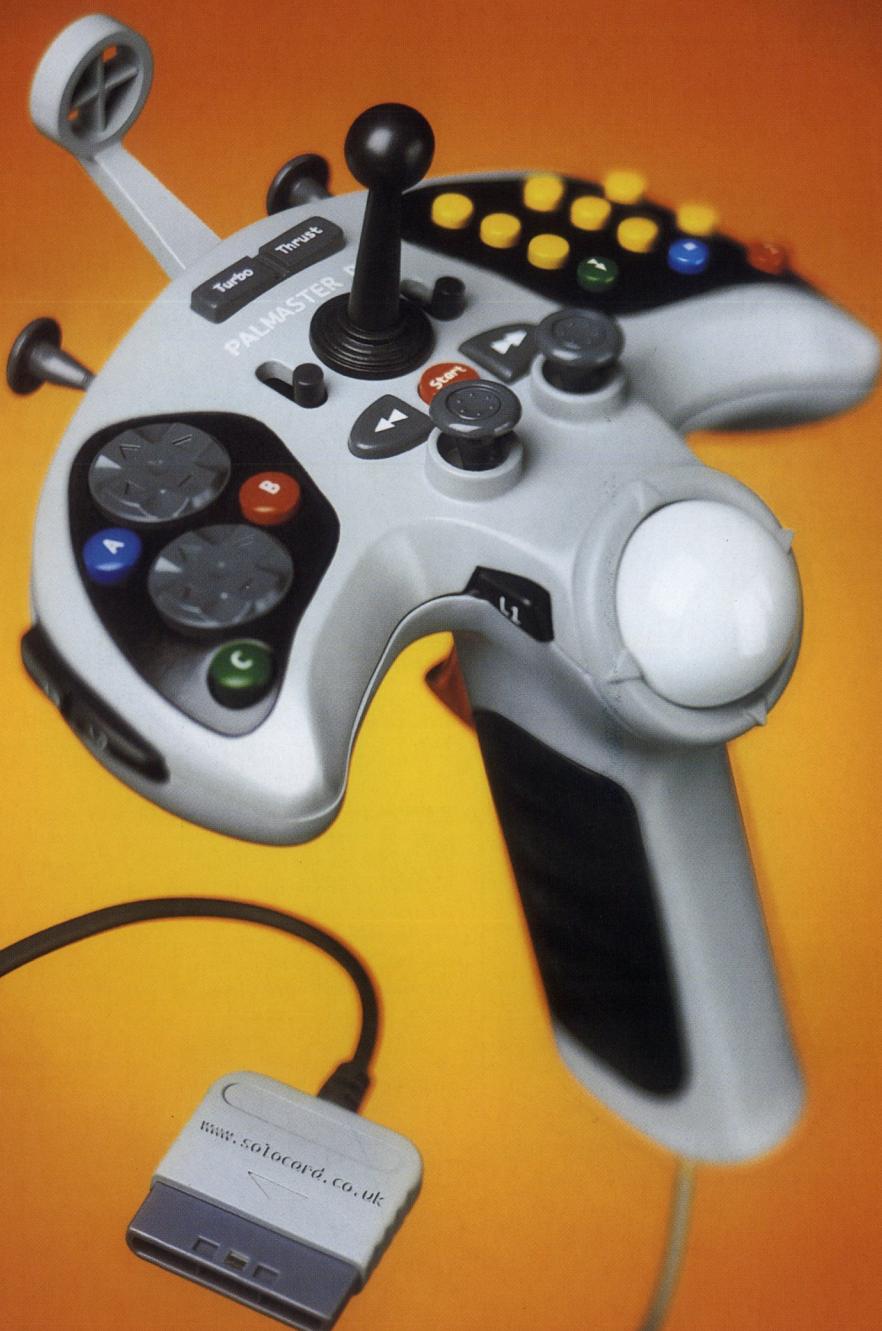
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to help you avoid spending
more than you have
available. Just swipe and
sign and the money will
come out of your account
a day or two later.

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FROM THE WORLD
OF PLAYSTATION...

THIS MONTH...

CONSOLE KINGS

Who's the fastest *Gran Turismo 2* racer in the UK? A postie from Yorkshire, that's who **page 014**



FOOTIE FUTURE

ISS Pro Evolution 2 isn't due until next year - take a gander at what it's going to look like **page 015**



PSONE AND ONLY

It's smaller, it's better looking, it's in the shops and Irish pop stars can't get enough of it **page 017**



SPORTS INVASION

EA launches new versions of *NBA*, *NHL* and *NASCAR 2001* and we've got the shots **page 020**



PLUS!

SHEEP DOG 'N' WOLF... CAT CALL... BEMANI INVASION... WWF IN THE DOCK... CALIFORNIA WATERSPORTS... WHEN SPIDERS BITE AND ALL LATEST NEWS FROM JAPAN...



"Truly stunning, Z.O.E. should make mech warrior games more popular when it's released next year"

TOKYO GAME SHOW

EASTWARD BOUND

KONAMI CROWNED KING OF THIS SEASON'S PACKED-TO-THE-RAFTERS TOKYO GAME SHOW

The crowds flocked once again to this autumn's instalment of the bi-annual Tokyo Game Show, with people pouring through the doors of the Makuhari Messe Exhibition Centre to check out the latest in the world of videogames.

The largest public videogame show in the world, TGS is attended by every big-name game publisher and the autumn 2000 show featured everything we'd hoped to see, as well as a few surprises...

Konami dominated the show with an enormous stand featuring 54 PlayStation 1 and PS2 games. Stealing the show in the playable games category was Hideo

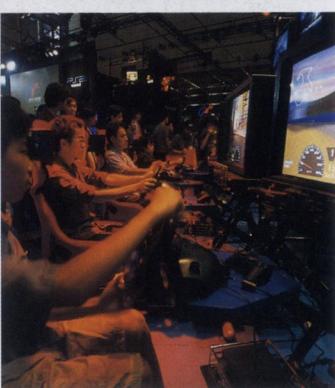
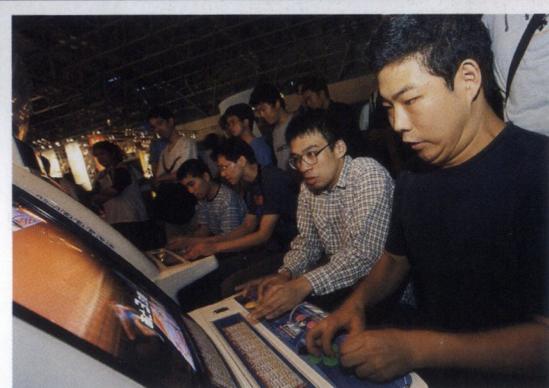
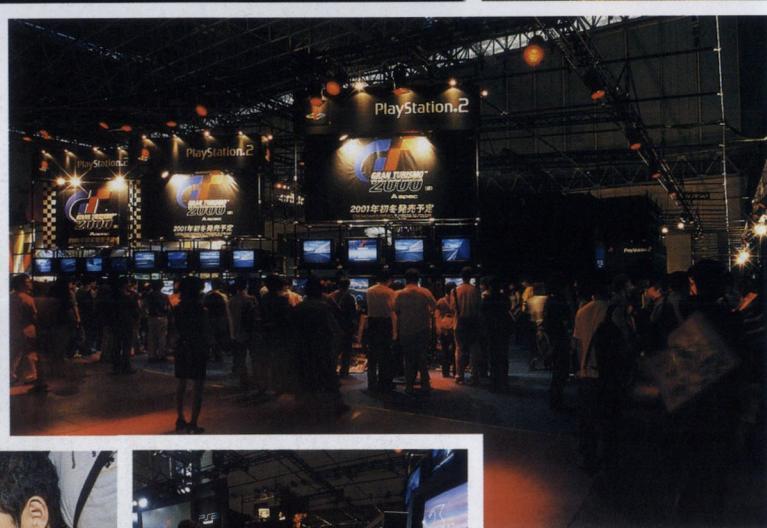
Kojima's mech warrior opus, *Z.O.E.* Cut-scenes flashed with robots flying round a futuristic landscape, light glinting off armour, rockets whizzing at targets in flurries of flame. "Nicely rendered," was our first thought - until the game actually began and we found ourselves throwing a robot around the screen that was exactly the same as the one we thought was a cut-scene. Truly stunning, *Z.O.E.* should make mech warrior games more popular when it's released in the UK next year.

While the Japanese crowds were provoked into fits of ecstasy by the new *Metal Gear Solid 2* video that we were treated to in London's ECTS show a couple of months ago (see OPM64), the

European contingent was looking out for something far more terrifying, *Silent Hill 2*. In a world first, Konami showed a short video for the sequel to the scariest game yet seen on PlayStation and it looks even more horrible than its predecessor. Peeping between our fingers, OPM watched as a bleeding, faceless, monster dragged a broken body around a blood spattered morgue. Urgh!

With eight halls crammed wall-to-wall with games there was plenty to play. Koei's upcoming *Winback* came on like *Metal Gear*, Taito's *Power Shovel De Go* digger controller smashed up the virtual building site, Enix showed off *Bust-A-Groove 2001* with its

LOADING



happy-clapper peripheral. Konami's time-travelling adventure *Shadow Of Memories*, unfurled like a complex novel.

Elsewhere, all manner of exciting techno gizmos were being unveiled, the like of which we'll be seeing in Europe very soon. Thanks to developer Sunsoft we saw PS2 hooked up to a printer, linked to a digital

camera and even online – via the company's online station.

Developer Enter Brain was showing off *Panzer Front* on PS1 via a pair of most unusual peripherals. The screen was contained within a pair of Olympus-built glasses that plugged straight into the back of the PlayStation, while the sound was supplied by a pair of

enormous headphones. But not the kind that fit over your ears – these rested on your shoulders.

The Tokyo Game Show wouldn't be the same without some kind of Japanese weirdness to relate, and this year was no exception. Anyone for Culture Brain's hamster and goldfish simulators? And that wasn't all. OPM stumbled across a gaggle of Japanese girls bizarrely dressed as Father Christmas' little helpers, demonstrating Konami's *Music Maestro*. This was the game we first heard about back in the spring, featuring a conductor's baton peripheral. At the time we thought it was an April Fool, but

"We saw PS2 hooked up to a printer, linked to a digital camera and even online"

UNDER COVER

RESI: THE MOVIE

Paul Anderson (*Mortal Kombat* and *Event Horizon*) will direct the \$40million *Resident Evil* movie, set for release on Halloween 2001. Based closely on the classic gaming series, the film tells the story of a military super computer that has malfunctioned and turned hordes of scientists into seething zombies. Shooting starts in Europe next January.



The Evil will slip into your local cinema next year

WOODPECKER WACING

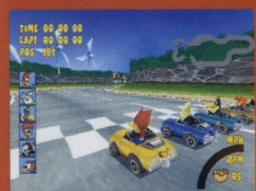
Konami is to add yet another cartoon character to the PlayStation karting list. This time it's Universal Studio's Woody Woodpecker who's putting his animated pedal to the metal in *Woody Woodpecker Racing*. Following in the well-worn tracks of many a Loony Toon, the bark-bashing bird and his pals can choose to compete in a World Championship, Time Trial or Single Race, in addition to the mandatory Quest Mode. You'll be able race in a variety of vehicles, including stock cars and 4x4s, around 12 venues, ranging from the heat of Death Valley to the smell of the Junkyard.

Lights, camera, action.
The crowds swarmed the GT3 (néé 2000) stand for a blast round Trial Mountain, but it was Konami's *Silent Hill 2* that spooked 'em...

no, it's real and OPM spent a happy half hour conducting along to the strains of *Jingle Bells*.

Curiously for such a peaceful society, Japan has an almost obsessive fascination for air guns. And not just your .22 rifles either. Tucked away in the merchandise hall OPM uncovered a stand dedicated to the guns from the *Resi Evil* series. Full size replicas of the army issue shotgun, AK47s, grenade launchers, M16 rifles and Colt pistols. Naturally we had a go, frightening the photographer we were pointing the barrel at.

Come the end, 136,400 people left the show with a better idea of what they'll be after in their Christmas stockings while we're left to wait until next spring's show, when a gentlemen on the Konami stand implied there might well be a playable *MGS2*. Expect the crowds to really roll out for that one... DM ■



The 'pecker joins the queue for the karting track

FREE GAMES

The UK-based videogame Web site theslammer.com, is offering free PlayStation games to anyone who signs up to its membership scheme. The site has three PS titles on offer, future-cop flight sim *G.Police Weapons Of Justice*, blast 'em up *Apocalypse* and *Premier Manager '99*. Each is available for £2.99 postage & packing. Visit the site at – you guessed it – www.theslammer.com.

LOADING

UNDER COVER

TOCA'S AMERICAN COUSIN

The brilliant *TOCA WTC* is released in America this month but not as we know it. Called *Jarret & Labonte Stock Car Racing*, it's been warped for US gamers into a muscle car-bound prang-fest that obviously suits the game's bloodthirsty damage model perfectly. Full of American drivers we've never heard of and remodelled US cars and tracks *Stock Car Racing* is otherwise very similar to our beloved *WTC*.



Moto mania. McGrath takes on young Pastrana

GET YOUR MOTO RUNNING

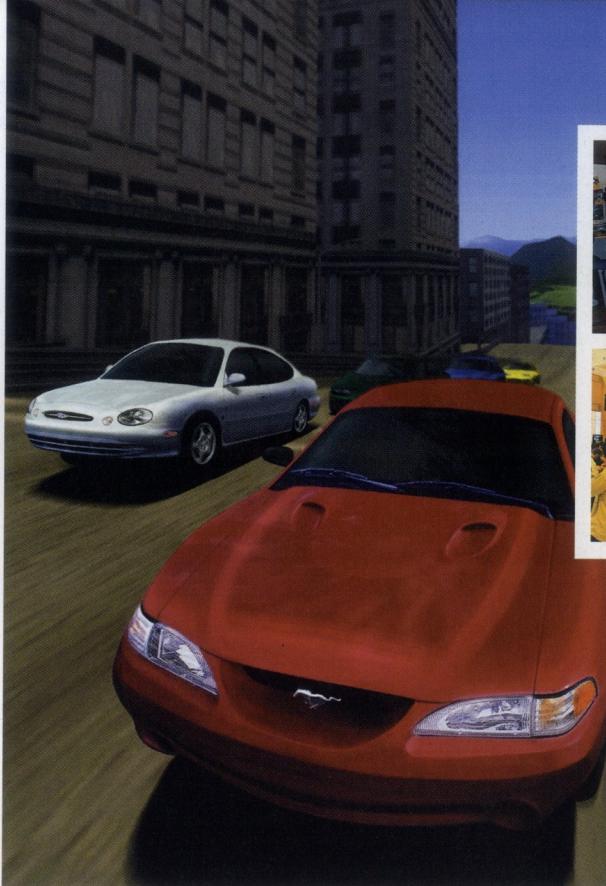
Acclaim has announced the release of extreme dirt biking sim *Freestyle Motocross McGrath Vs Pastrana*. Z-Axis, developer of *Dave Mirra's Freestyle BMX* is behind the title, which features the two hottest stars of supercross in a combination of tricks and racing. You'll be able to race as either Pastrana, the 16-year-old X-Games gold medalist, or Jeremy McGrath in locations including Loch Ness and Tombstone. *McGrath Vs Pastrana* should skid into view before Christmas.



Looking for danger? You just found the right girl

DANGEROUS DAMSEL

Whipping up a storm this month will be THQ's *Danger Girl*. Featuring a team of top-heavy beauties and based on the DC Comics series, the game sees you take charge of three buxom babes who've been recruited to the evil Hammer organisation. An action adventure, this time promising 12 levels of play in six "exotic" locations. Expect tons of gadgets, multiple modes and horny teenagers locked in their bedrooms all night.



Faster, higher, stronger. (Left): Gladiator Saracen and runner-up Allan McKay hold up PlayStation champion Lee Hamilton's (middle) huge £1,000 cheque

GAMEPLAY CHALLENGE

CONSOLES OF FIRE

YORKSHIRE POSTIE LEE HAMILTON BECOMES THE UK'S FIRST CONSOLE CHAMP

It was Day Eight of Sydney 2000, but the competition wasn't to win a medal, it was to bag £1,000 in the UK's first Console Championships at London's Earl's Court.

The capital's premier exhibition venue was host to Live 2000, the definitive collection of gadgets, hi-fi wondrousness and techno marvels.

Dominating the rear of the hall was online retailer Gameplay.com's Final's venue and at 1pm on Saturday, 23 September, four heroes stepped forward, ready to battle for the title of UK PlayStation Champion.

Heats throughout August had whittled the contestants down to Lee Hamilton and Paul Taylor, both from Leeds; Matt Follett from Chertsey representing the South and Allan McKay from Scotland. A random semi-final

draw brought both the Leeds lads together on the High Speed Ring of *Gran Turismo 2*.

"I had the lead for the first lap, but was in second place throughout the second lap," admitted Lee, a postie when not on his PS. "There was only the last corner to go, so I had to use Paul as a bit of a buffer by taking him on the inside and forcing him wide."

"I don't mind," conceded Paul Taylor, a student at Nottingham Trent University. "It's the way of *Gran Turismo*, and I would have done the same thing to Lee."

Matt Follett, a games tester with EA, found himself up against one of

the favourites, schoolboy Allan McKay. Roundly beaten by several seconds, Matt was just grateful he got this far.

"I was outclassed," he admitted before being called back for the third-place play-off against Paul. This time racing on the complex

twists of Tahiti Road he was outclassed again, coming second by three seconds. Still, he got £150 for his troubles. Paul looked slightly happier with his £400 prize money, but could only look on as the finalists took their seats.

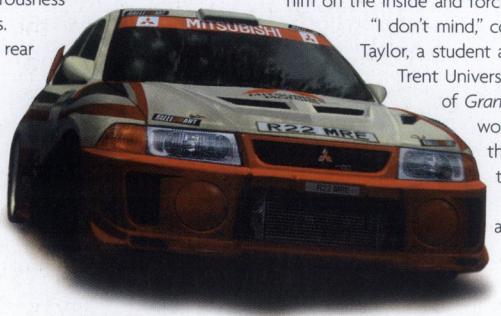
Lee was clearly nervous while Allan seemed relaxed. The giant TV changed to the split-screen opening view of Tahiti Road. A countdown timer began. They were off.

Allan took an early lead, having drawn the front car at the start, but after catching a barrier on the first chicane Lee moved alongside. Just as he tried to overtake, Lee was squeezed out on the next bend, but he was still no more than a quarter of a second behind. Allan maintained his lead into the second lap, but that first chicane proved to be the cool Scots' undoing once again. Scraping barriers on both sides, he was passed by Lee and proceeded to hit more barriers on the next two corners. It was the end of Allan's challenge as he never recovered, losing by a full two seconds. "I'm still really nervous," said Lee afterwards, clutching his £1,000 prize money, "but it feels good."

Read more about the competition at www.ukconsolechamps.com. ■



"The first chicane proved to be the cool Scots' undoing once again"





"E banged it!" The Japanese version of *Pro Evolution 2* looks great, but what about the commentary?

FOOTIE SEQUEL

ISS EVOLVES AGAIN

OPM GETS FIRST PLAY OF THE JAPANESE VERSION OF PRO EVOLUTION 2

Pespite the imminent arrival of *ISS* (see page 56), many gamers are already looking forward to *ISS Pro Evolution 2* from the KCET development team, and OPM has played the Japanese code that will spawn the UK game.

Set for release next March, the game will carry a FIFPro licence, enabling Konami to reproduce real player names.

At first glance, the Japanese version looks very much like last

year's highly acclaimed *ISS Pro Evolution* (OPM55 9/10), but there are several key differences to the gameplay, animations and physics.

Gone are the melodramatic rolls when you are fouled, and in their place comes a sudden slump to the ground. If you are hacked, there's a chance you could sustain an injury. The crossing has been greatly enhanced too – the passes are more direct and fruitful than the looping, straight balls of the previous game. It's also

possible to hoof the ball into the air and plant some gravity-defying headers down the pitch.

The game is discernably faster and space is at more of a premium, so you really have to plan your next move. Goalkeepers can now be booked, are better animated and more athletic, palming shots away one-handed.

With the exception of the silly looping headers, the changes are certainly for the better – smoothing out *Pro Evolution's* niggles. More next month. ■

STEAL 'EM UP

WOLF MISSILE

SHEEP RUSTLING IS COMING TO PLAYSTATION

Inforframes is working on a game starring Wile E Coyote's not-so-clever cousin, Ralph Wolf. The puzzle/platformer, provisionally entitled *Sheep Dog 'N' Wolf*, will be packed with all the crazy gags and traps we've come to expect from the *Road Runner* cartoons.

The idea is that you first set up a series of wild contraptions and crackpot schemes and then zoom into Playing Mode where

you get to see whether you'll bag the sheep or plummet to your doom. Even if you do survive, arch-enemy Sam The Sheep Dog will try to give you a pasting.

You can look forward to strapping an ACME rocket to your back and making like a jet-propelled brick, as well as disguising yourself as a rock or bush to creep closer to your prey.

Packed with idiocy of the highest order, *Sheep Dog 'N' Wolf* is due next April. ■



Crying wolf. Looking a lot like cousin Wile E, Ralph Wolf takes a look at his woolly prey



LOADING

Catherine Channon Sky One's red-bereted gamesvixen swaps screen for print in search of a quiet life at *PSM*.

CAT CALL

FEAR NOT, THERE'S LIFE IN THE OLD GEAR YET

By the time our next issue goes on sale, the PlayStation 2 will (all being well) have been released. This is likely to leave anyone who has not had the wisdom to save for the last few months rather frustrated.

After all, short of turning to a life of crime, your chances of just rustling up the necessary few hundred quid immediately are pretty slim. So while your more frugal friends are pouring over the shelves of their local game shop, working out which of the release titles they can afford, you could be left feeling a little down in the mouth.

If this is the case, cheer up – you've got the best of both worlds. Look on the bright side, because there are benefits to your best mates having a PS2 rather than you...

Think about it. They've had to sell all they own to get the machine, the game and the extra joypad. They're unlikely to have seen a pint for the last month, and probably won't for the next (unless it's someone else's round). And it'll be their house getting trashed as the entire pub decamps to their lounge for a game of *Ridge Racer V*.

By contrast, you and your PlayStation 1 have a long, fruitful and far more economical relationship ahead of you. And if you're worried about software, don't be. We've been saying for long enough that there will continue to be plenty of support for PS1, and if you didn't believe us then, just look at the disc line-up: *Crash Bash*, *Spyro: Year Of The Dragon*, *Mat Hoffman's TOCA World Touring Cars*... Need we say more? ■

PROMOTION

FAR EASTERN FROLICS WITH 'FANTA'

GARY STELLING JETS OFF TO JAPAN FOR THE TRIP OF A LIFETIME, THANKS TO 'FANTA'



When it comes to offering great prizes 'Fanta' must be at the top of the league. Just ask Gary Stelling, winner of the 'Fanta' competition in OPM62 for a trip of a lifetime to the Tokyo Game Show. "It was absolutely brilliant," he says. "I can't believe how lucky we were. We've been telling everyone about it and they're so jealous."

Gary, a machinist from Mansfield, decided to take his lucky girlfriend, Kelly Nussey, and her sister Tracy with him to Tokyo, courtesy of 'Fanta'. For the trip was extra special – it was her first time abroad. And what a time they had!

After checking into their exclusive hotel in the heart of one of the most exciting cities on the planet they hardly had time to get used to the swanky surroundings before 'Fanta' whisked them off to the Tokyo Game Show. The show is the highlight of the year for videogame developers and publishers and they show off the games everyone will be playing for the next 12 months. Thanks to 'Fanta' Gary was able to be one of the first people from this country to get their hands on the star of the show, the fantastic *Gran Turismo 2000* on PlayStation 2 – a guaranteed smash hit when it is released next year. "It was unbelievable," Gary says. "I have *Gran Turismo* at home and this just blew it away. It was like driving a rally car." Gary also managed to see how Hideo Kojima was getting on with *Metal Gear Solid* and play some great PS1 games, including *Crash Bash*.

The next day it was off to Disneyland Tokyo where Gary, Tracy and Kelly had the chance to go on some breathtaking rides, including Haunted Mansion and Space Mountain and also meet all the Disney gang, Japanese style.

The trio's final day was dedicated to doing what everyone who visits Tokyo just has to find time for – shopping. Heading first for the Akihabara district to check out the electronic delights of Japan. "The stuff they have is amazing," says Gary. "It makes what you can get in Britain look prehistoric. Everything is so small and light." Next up was the Ginza district where the girls did some serious shopping while Gary visited Sony headquarters to play more PlayStation 2 games.

Then it was time to say goodbye to Tokyo and head for home, tired but happy with a million things to tell everyone back in Mansfield. "We had so much fun," Gary says, "thanks to 'Fanta' it really was the trip of a lifetime."

'Fanta' is a registered trade mark of The Coca-Cola Company.
Diet 'Fanta' is a trade mark of The Coca-Cola Company.

Share the Fun



Photographer: Jamie Cheadle



So pretty. If it's good enough for pop stars it's good enough for us. Sony is selling a reported 20,000 PSones a week in Japan. 20,000!

PSONE

EVEN RONAN'S GOT ONE! (ALLEGEDLY)

UK PSONE SALES EXCEED SONY'S EXPECTATIONS

Irish pop stars are queuing up to get their hands on Sony's new pocket-sized parcel of gaming pleasure. Celtic heart-throb Ronan Keating and supergroup U2 are just some of the celebrity set putting the new PSone in their recording studios and tour buses, according to the *News Of The World*.

The story surfaced shortly after the new machine's 29 September release date, but Sony was unwilling to confirm whether the boys from the Emerald Isle did indeed

camp out in the midnight rain for their new consoles.

Back in the real world, Sony have confirmed that UK PSone sales had reached a corking 13,000 in the first weekend of trading and was confident that the European trend would follow that of Japan. PSone is shifting upward of 20,000 units per week in its homeland and PSone games account for 57% of the market, as opposed to a 17.7% share for PS2 titles. Good news because a healthy PSone market means publishers will keep those games flowing. ■



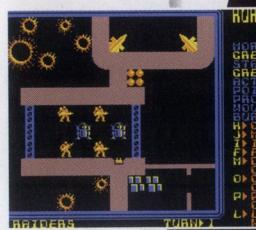
RETRO LIMBO

IS IT ARCADE HEAVEN OR COIN-OP HELL? WE DECIDE. THIS MONTH: REBELSTAR

WHY I LOVE REBELSTAR

As turn-based strategic combat sims on the old 48K Spectrum went, *Rebelstar Raiders* was the only game in town. A colony base had been taken over by the droid workers within, and as the commander of a crack squad of toolled-up space marines it was your task to wrest control back from the tin-horn hordes. First off, you had to choose your entry point into the base, then cut through bulkheads and airlocks with your laser-toting mining droids, and co-ordinate your forces once inside. A huge variety of weapons, varied characters with different stats and a superb control system made the Gollap Brothers, who were later to create the *X-COM* series, legends in their own lunchtime. Gripping stuff. Loved it then, love it still.

Mark Donald



WHY I HATE REBELSTAR

Rebelstar Raiders, was the same sort of spoddy turn-based tosh, only it looked even worse. The reason it's pertinent to talk about *Rebelstar Raiders* here is that it started a trend for this sort of game, which pops up from time to time even today. They are crap. They are dull. *Rebelstar* and its peers set a pointless ball of gaming fluff into motion, and we still live with that legacy. Turn-based strategy is a thing of the past, folks: fact. Given the choice between playing *Rebelstar* and drinking a glass of mouldy milk, I'd choose the latter. I wouldn't enjoy it, but it'd be better than revisiting a genre which should've been strangled at birth. *Rebelstar*? Hate it.

Lee Hall

Verdict: Mark's structured appreciation beats Lee's opinionated rambling hands-down. *Rebelstar* good!



Tony Mott is the editor of the world's most authoritative multi-format gaming magazine, *Edge*

FUTURE PROOF

WHY YOUR DENTIST WILL BUY A PLAYSTATION 2

At a party the other evening, I was introduced to a friend of a friend whose opening remark was, "So, I gather you edit a videogames magazine." Inside, I groaned, expecting his next volley to be the one that most commonly follows this revelation: "That must be a laugh – sitting around playing games all day."

But it didn't come. Instead, this chap – a 30-year-old dentist, to put him in some form of context – said, "So you must've written quite a lot about PlayStation 2 recently. I put down my own £50 pre-order deposit just the other day." Clearly a keen videogamer, then, I thought.

"Play a lot of games, do you?" I asked. "Not really," he replied. "I've got a PlayStation at home, but I don't really use it very often." So why was this non-hobbyist gamer itching to be one of the first people in the UK to get his hands on Sony's new console? I should have seen the response coming. "Oh, well, it's a DVD player as well, isn't it? I've been meaning to get one for a while now, and I figured I might as well do it this way."

The fact that he hadn't even bothered to find out anything about the quality of the console's DVD movie playback (perfectly agreeable, as it happens) speaks volumes about Sony's reputation. For the last 12 months DVD players have been moving further from the realms of the tech-head niche and very much into the mass-market consumer mainstream.

This Christmas, such an item must be high on many a Joe Average's shopping list. So my new cavity-filling acquaintance served to make one thing especially clear: whatever other problems have beset Sony (tabloid 'rip-off' headlines, a lack of hardware) it seems to at least have its UK PS2 launch timing bang on the nose.

PREVIEWS



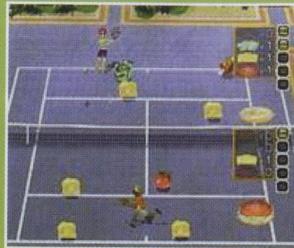
GOEMAN

KONAMI (PS2) / 2001

Before Solid Snake stole the limelight, Goemon was Konami's biggest star in Japan. Now the punk-haired ninja is on his way to PlayStation 2 in a 3D RPG/adventure. The mystic one, accompanied by his faithful red-collared moggie, explores dangerous mountains, fields swarming with enemies and abandoned villages. He must leap his way



from branch to branch, or rooftop to rooftop, avoiding perilous drops and chatting to friendly monkeys, among others, as part of his quest. There's plenty of work still to be done on this title, which brought mixed reactions from Tokyo show-goers. The 3D game engine will have to improve if Goemon's to regain his star status. ■



SMASH COURT 3

NAMCO (PS1) / NOVEMBER

A '70s vibe underpins Namco's first appearance on court since the brilliant Anna Kournikova's *Smash Court Tennis*. Not that you'll exactly be reliving the days of Bjorn Borg and Ilie Nastase. *Smash Court 3*'s creators promise that there will be 24 playable characters, all with that unique cutesy anime styling you either love or (surely not!) hate. There's a cheesy TV theme to the action, with a cartoon host and the chance to shine in a series of



televised challenges. Elsewhere, a Mini-Game Mode offers three variants on the game of bat and ball, including the Explosive Bomb Mode, which could be found in the lovely Miss Kournikova's game. Four players can get in on the action, so once you get tired of acing the targets and PlayStation-controlled opponents, you can always whack your mates in the plums just for a laugh. You cannot be serious. Oh yes we can. ■

ORIENT EXPRESS

ALL THE LATEST JAPANESE PLAYSTATION NEWS BEAMED DIRECT FROM TOKYO

WONDER SWAN

LITTLE WONDER

BANDAI UNVEILS NEW HANDHELD

Bandai's new handheld console, Wonder Swan Color, was spotted in abundance at the Tokyo Game Show. Nothing unusual in that, you might suppose – Wonder Swan is popular here in Japan and the new version is being billed locally as a Gameboy Advance-beater. What makes it special this time, though, is the sheer range of electronic gadgetry that can be hooked up to the machine, suggesting – among other things – that a world of Tamagotchi nonsense is on its way over to you in Britain.

Wonder Swan Color is capable of hooking up to a PlayStation, PS2, PocketStation, laptop, mobile phone and even Casio's new Wrist Camera. At this stage it's not known how the different machines will work together, but we've seen pictures uploaded from the Wrist Camera on to PocketStation, which can then be manipulated on Wonder Swan. The machine's USB port also enables it to connect with many other gadgets including digital camcorders and PS2.

As far as games go, Bandai unveiled the first *Final Fantasy* as a lead title for the machine, followed by *Final Fantasy II* and *III* as well as other FF-orientated games, possibly including *Hataraku Chocobo*. Wonder Swan Color is also backward-compatible with Wonder Swan games, opening up a huge back catalogue to collect. And since it's relatively niche, even in Japan, Wonder Swan will also feature some of the stranger games and peripherals that infest the Akihabara backstreets. Bandai is releasing *Hamster Everywhere 3*, sequel to the popular PlayStation hamster-breeding sim, at Christmas. The game even enables you to mate hamsters with your friends' hamsters, thanks to the link cable.

Whether WSC is ever released in Europe remains to be seen, although Bandai says not. Of course, if you lot suddenly go Japanese-RPG crazy, that could quickly change. ■



Wonder Swan Color begins to demonstrate what interconnectivity really is. The IR link is becoming an increasingly efficient way of transferring information. But no-one really knows what it'll be used for. Yet



NEW RELEASES

SHANGHAI: THE FOUR ELEMENTS

SUNSOFT (PS2)

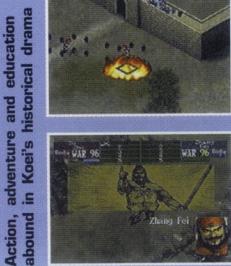
Yes! It's Mahjong for PS2! *Shanghai* is a variant of the oriental game and this edition, the third in the series, features fully rotatable 3D tiles. Sadly this makes them harder to see than most 2D tile games. *Shanghai* revolves around the four elements, with realistic natural phenomena and multiple light sourcing. It even has multiple game modes, including one where you have to remove all the tiles before the on-screen candles burn out. It's still just Mahjong though. ■



ROMANCE OF THE THREE KINGDOMS VI

KOEI (PS2)

Based on an epic Chinese tale of military warfare, *Romance Of The Three Kingdoms VI* is a tactical strategy game that sees you stomping your mark over feudal China. Cao Cao bags the mountains, Sun Ken the coastline and Liu Bei fancies a rumble over the rest. Pick a side and attempt to force all of China to bow to your will. Nice idea. A key feature of the game is the inclusion of short scenarios that help you hone your tactical skills ready for the epic battle. ■



SLAP HAPPY RHYTHM BUSTERS

SCEJ (PS1)

Coming on like a cross between *Street Fighter* and *Beatmania*, *Slap Happy* is deeply odd. Ostensibly a character-driven fighting game, *Slap Happy* features anime-inspired players battling it out in a 2.5D environment. The more punches that make contact, the more power in the beat bar – until the screen explodes into a rhythm-action game along the lines of a Bemani title, linked to super combos. The player with the inherent 'riddim' unleashes the ultimate beat. ■



Reliance on rhythm brings success in battle with the 'busters. Beat it

AKIHABARA WATCH

NINJA X STALKS THE BACK STREETS OF TOKYO'S TECH DISTRICT AND DOWNLOADS THE LATEST TRUTHS AND LIES FOR OPM-SAN...

Apparently "a WonderBorg must obey the orders given to it by a human being", which would be worrying if it was a laser-eyed insect cyborg and not the latest robot toy from Bandai. Measuring just over 12cm (including antennae) the 'autonomous insect robot' comes complete with infrared and touch sensors, enabling it to get to the shops without falling off the kerb.

It's true: cool people always want to dress as game characters, which is why *Resident Evil* replica clothing is all the rage in Tokyo boutiques. Want to sport a leather waistcoat à la Claire? A puffy Leon? Now you can. Evil types can even purchase Umbrella Corp sweatshirts for those long nights slaving in the lab.

SCEJ has released the second part of *Dondora*, a DVD anime horror game for PlayStation 1. *Blood* The Last Vampire stars a young boy with the blood of a shadow ninja coursing through his veins. He must fight off hungry vampires before embarking on a journey to discover his own sacred destiny.

Konami's 24 O'Clock Policeman *Shinjuku* is due. As well as a lightgun it comes with a camera so you physically have to duck incoming rounds...

JAPAN CHARTS

TOP 5 - SALES



- ① Dragon Quest VII (Enix)
- ② Dino Crisis 2 (Capcom)
- ③ Genso Suikoden Vol.1: Swordsman Of Harmonia (Konami)
- ④ Gekkoukan Pro Baseball: At The End Of The Century 1999 (Square PS2)
- ⑤ Jikkou World Soccer Winning Eleven 2000 (Konami)

TOP 5 - MOST WANTED



- ① Metal Gear Solid 2 (Konami PS2)
- ② Final Fantasy X (Square PS2)
- ③ Onimusha Warlord (Capcom PS2)
- ④ Tales Of Eternia (Nacon)
- ⑤ Star Ocean 3 (Enix PS2)

TOP 5 - READERS' FAVOURITES



- ① Ridge Racer V (Nacon PS2)
- ② Super Robot Taisen (Banpresto)
- ③ Mobile Suit Gundam: Giren's
- ④ Ambition (Bandai PS2)
- ⑤ Tekken Tag (Nacon PS2)
- ⑥ Kessen (Enix PS2)



Mystery games agent Ninja X stalks the streets of Tokyo hungry for polygons...

OTAKU YOUTH

OPPOSING THUMBS? - OLD HAT

Using your hands to play games? How primitive. Here in Japan, Taito has come up with a true next-generation control system that lets you play with nothing more than a good pair of lungs. The voice-control system, that currently works with PS2 footie game *Greatest Striker*, interprets simple commands like "Shoot!" and "Pass!", then turns them into on-screen action. In this way you can actually control every member of your team via the microphone accessory.

The system, which also works with Taito's latest Mah Jong title, is similar to the hardware used by fighter pilots to select and fire guided missiles. The potential applications are enormous, considering the power of PS2. Can it be that long before you can engage in role-play chit-chat for real, or select weapons in a 3D shooter with just a voice command? We think not. Linked with mobile phones or broadband networks, the chance to insult your mates while pumping rockets into their digital alter-egos is unlikely to be passed up. ■

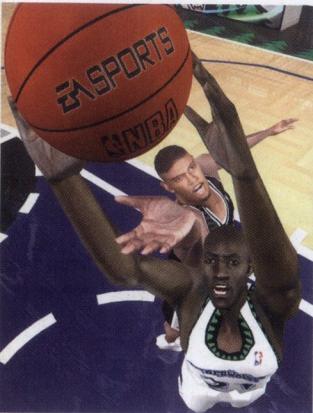
ONLY IN JAPAN

POWER SHOVEL DE GO

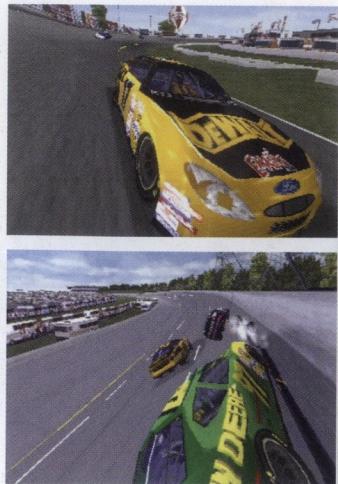
The current fad for simulating real life perhaps a little too closely continues with the release of *PowerShovel De Go*, a PlayStation game that makes you take control of a mechanical digger. Compatible with a dual joystick peripheral, the idea is to transport a variety of scoopable commodities against the clock. *PowerShovel De Go* is also PocketStation-compatible, enabling you to save a little hard-hatted character - along with bags of cash - to your PDA, where your digging skills can be further refined. ■



LOADING



"It's my ball!"
NBA Basketball rises
to the challenge



Ice is nice. NHL 2001 marks the series' tenth anniversary.
Make you feel old?

SPORTS GAMES

EA ON THE OFFENSIVE

NHL, NBA AND NASCAR 2001 HEAD FOR THE UK

EA Sports, are unleashing this season's instalments of its American sports titles on the UK this autumn. *NHL 2001*, celebrates its tenth anniversary and joins *NASCAR 2001* and *NBA Live 2001* on the pre-Christmas shelves, all hoping to benefit from the reputation of the ever popular *FIFA* series.

Revamped CPU AI, 20 new international teams and 30 NHL teams are some of the features offered in the puck-fixated *NHL 2001*. Like the *FIFA* series there's the full gamut of seasonal play and Career Mode, only NHL also offers you the opportunity to commit extreme violence with a big wooden stick.

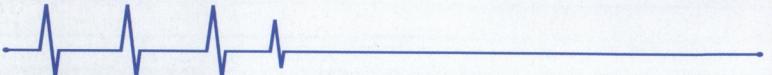
Meanwhile, *NASCAR 2001* includes a new game engine with enhanced graphics, car physics, and the chance to race the Daytona circuit for the first time in the series. Key to the new game is the ability to create your own three-man team and skip between drivers at any time during the gruelling races.

Screenshots of *NBA Live 2001* suggest fans of the slam-dunk series certainly won't be disappointed. NBA All-Star Kevin Garnett supplied the motion-capture and there's new animations for all your hoop shooting moves. The game also features hidden teams like the classic '72 Lakers, as well as a bunch of gameplay challenges like winning by a certain margin of points, which add to your teams overall standing.

NHL 2001 and *NBA Live 2001* will be reviewed next issue and *NASCAR 2001* will appear before Christmas. ■

SISTER MERCY'S WAITING ROOM OF DECAY

Each month the good Sister bores holes into the PlayStation's goriest games and diagnoses the damage that would result if the injuries therein were to happen in Real Life. This month? *Spider-Man*...



• CASE STUDY

Diagnosis: This man has two major problems – the spider bite and the long-term effects of radiation. The venom from the spider will be quickly transported around his body via the bloodstream. This will cause pain, swelling, inflammation and, in some cases, paralysis, asphyxiation and anaphylactic shock, the symptoms of which are muscle spasm, capillary dilation and convulsions. The victim may also develop the ability to climb walls, spin webs, talk without moving his lips and sense danger at long distances.

Prognosis: If the patient has suffered a severe reaction he will need an instant injection of adrenaline, resuscitation, IV fluids and huge doses of steroids. The bites themselves will need to be treated with a broad-spectrum antibiotic to prevent septicaemia and followed with more specific treatment when the species of spider is identified.

The effects of radiation are treated as they arise. The treatment may involve a combination of cytotoxic drugs and a regime of blood transfusions. The recovery process is drawn-out and painful.

Note: the patient may express a desire to wear his pants outside his trousers. This is a normal reaction to trauma. ■

In real life, Sister Mercy is Nurse Carol Channon, RGN RSCN. Oh, yes... Cat's mum.

SCOOP!

EXCLUSIVE SNEERS... CURIOUS WHISPERS... GOSSIPING FACTOIDS...

More news on *Yawning Fantasy MCCXII*. Those Cubesoft translators have been at it again. In the latest instalment of the epic RPG series, hero Davids refers to an elderly lady who has been laid out flat by a bruising Imperial soldier as, "Like a wrinkly spatchcock poussin!" More controversially a small ginger child is asked, "Did a rooster lay a pancreas, perchance?" Worryingly, throughout the game teenage girls are referred to as "flabby chesters", or "I'l doo-dahs" ... Alien Resurrection has been deemed so hard by the powerful Associated Rating Syndicate for Entertainment

that government ministers have sat up and taken notice. Junior Schools Minister Paul Smeris has suggested in a leaked memo to Downing Street that the game should be a GCSE by 2002... Pony Computer Entertainment Europe (PCEE) has just released a list of game and character names it rejected during quality assurance testing. Some of the changed monikers have gone on to be household names. For instance, Gabe Loogie became Gabe Logan and Brian Smith was transformed into Afro Thunder. Most controversially, *FIFA 2000* was originally called *FIFA '99*...



Publisher Eros is in hot water over a cheat mode in its *Olympics 2000* title. Tapping in 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 on the menu screen activates a Steroids Mode in which the athletes perform ten per cent faster. Rumours of a Bribe Mode have been denied. **King Mr Scoop!**



IT SHOULDN'T BE ENTERTAINING.

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LOADING

SCREEN TEST

DR HOLLYWOOD IS KNOCKING.
SOMEONE LET THE MAN IN, PLEASE

14. ESPN Great Outdoor Games

"Cod, Carp & Two Smoking Kippers"
Written and directed by: Mike Reid

THE PLOT:

It's the future, and the art of fishing has long been forgotten. After a freak reactor accident, a school of 20 giant nuclear trout has spread throughout the world's oceans. Impervious to conventional weapons and futuristic fishing techniques, they are a growing threat the authorities must eradicate. EastEnder Mike Reid rules the world with a rod of iron, but even his troops become fodder for the captain's table. Cue embittered convict James Kipper (David Jason). After being wrongfully imprisoned for A Salt And Battering, his only chance of an early release is to hook the big fish. However, with *Emmerdale's* Lisa Riley and Spice Girl Gerri Halliwell lending some such needed glamour to proceedings everything is not as it seems...

THE PITCH:

Lisa Riley's first 'big' film role, in a movie combining high-tech computer graphics à la *Titanic* with the 'best' of British acting.

GREEN LIGHT OR DEVELOPMENT HELL?

Cod almighty! This is a terrible idea. The redeeming factor would have been big Frank effin' and blindin' at the fishy queen, but any attempts at serious acting by David Jason should be discouraged at all costs. This wouldn't even cut it as a Channel Five feature-length movie. Then again, maybe it would... ■



Fishy! A bad game spawns a bad film... but at least that lovely Lisa Riley is still getting work...



THE CAST



▲ Mike Reid as President Guly, the foul-mouthed leader of the world



▲ David Jason as James Kipper, whose rod skills wow stunned onlookers



▲ Gerri Halliwell as the prison guard Kipper can't stomach



▲ Lisa Riley as the corpulent nuclear trout queen

WATERSPORTS SIM

WAVE ATTACK

MIDAS TO RELEASE MODERN-DAY CALIFORNIA GAMES

Midas Interactive Entertainment is bringing some of America's West Coast sunshine to the winter months with the release of *California Watersports*, due to float into the shops in January.

Developed in Australia by Theyer GFX, the game enables players to compete in aquatic competitions on a whole flotilla of watercraft, ranging from the humble boogie board to the mighty jet ski.

Choose from eight buffed-up characters and six game modes, including Big Air Competitions and Split-Screen Slaloms. There are also variable ride

options, so you can start with the straightforward Free Ride and progress to the more complicated Trick Competition. You can surf from an array of shimmering beaches, which Theyer GFX has attempted to create complete with shifting sands and realistic wave patterns. Apparently water hazards such as helicopter drop-off zones, rocky obstacles, and obstructive dolphins will also feature.

With the recent surge in aquatic extreme sports, Midas is hoping that these briny novelties, together with music by surf label JetPilot, will be enough to set *California Watersports* apart. ■



Jetskiing USA. Midas dips into the extreme sports waters with *California Watersports* – just don't hurt the dolphins

TRADEMARK MOVE

WWF vs WWF

LEGAL SCRAP OVER TRADEMARK RIGHTS

No, not the latest offering from THQ, but news that has shaken the wrestling community to the seat of its Lycra-clad pants. The World Wildlife Fund, set up in 1961 to help protect all aspects of our natural habitat, is attempting to sue the World Wrestling Federation for breach of copyright.

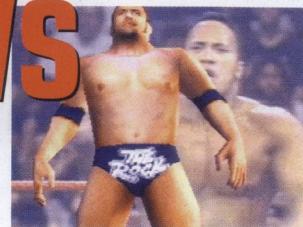
The case, which will be pursued through the UK legal system, has been active for several years and centres on who has the legitimate rights to the famed WWF trademark.

The UK press office of the World Wildlife Fund told OPM that, should it be successful, there were no plans for the eco-friendly organisation to capitalise on the WWF name and branch into videogames. The suggestion that it might like to consider a WWF Endangered Species fighting game, where snow leopards and white rhino do battle in environmental hotspots, was ignored.

President of the fund, HRH The Duke of Edinburgh, was unavailable to comment on who he thought would win in a battle between Panda from Tekken 3 and The Rock from WWF Smackdown. The court case continues. ■



OPM called the Palace, but was told that Prince Philip was 'unavailable' to say who would hit the canvas first. Our money's on Panda



IT SHOULD BE A GAME

NUDE DUDE / DANIEL CHANT

• The Concept

You play a man who has just split up with his girlfriend. Embittered, she has burnt all of his clothes to teach him a lesson after she caught him watching football on a Monday night. He has to walk the streets in search of nice clothes to cover his scrawny body. It's the stuff of everyone's nightmares – a psychological thriller involving raw nudity over five colourful backgrounds.

• The Pitch

Using only a tatty metal coat-hanger as a weapon you have to beat-up toffs and steal items of clothing. You can only get one garment from each person before they scarper. Points are deducted for offending grannies and small children as they glimpse your

boily rear. Each level ends with your return to the ex-girlfriend's apartment where five items of clothing escaped the blaze. You have one minute to root through the place before she returns with her bulldog, Buff. Failure to do so means you'll have to beat hell out of the dog, then leg it as it lies battered in the back yard. Fear not, on completion of a quick sub-game you'll be back later for another chance.

• The Verdict

The idea of a man belting about the place with his arse out is inherently appealing. The catty girlfriend factor adds much needed sexual tension and she'll be a great bitchy anti-hero.

The ridiculous combinations of clothes could be, well, funny. A winner.

**FROM THIS... TO THIS!**

Would you like to see your game ideas brought to life? Send your pitch PLUS original artwork to the usual address and you could win a framed copy of OPM's version of your design.

**BEMANI GAME**

YOU'RE A DANCING FOOL

UK PREPARES FOR A BEMANI INVASION

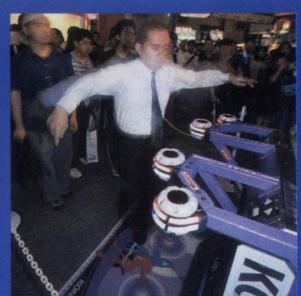
Konami Japan has just unveiled the latest game in its wacky Bemani series. Released under the title of *Para Para Paradise*, the game combines traditional Japanese dance routines with futuristic Euro pop.

To date the only Bemani game to have reached Europe is *Beatmania*, the DJ simulator. In the same vein, other sims

accompanied by their relevant peripherals are fast approaching UK release, including *Drum Mania*, *Guitar Freaks* and *Keyboard Mania*. Before too long you should be enjoying them in the arcades and eventually they will be linked to your PlayStation in the comfort of our own home.

It's thought that these games could spawn an entire generation of Bemani

bedroom bands. On a recent trip to Japan OPM tried its hand at all the games in the series and hopes to launch a single under the title *Spill Med Meg* later this year. Heavily influenced by the Nordic tones of Liv Kvello – with a special guest appearance by Mark Donald on the pipes – we're aiming for next year's Eurovision Song Contest... ■



Quick step! *Para Para Paradise* – not for the dignified

OPM CHARTS

WHAT'S HOT AND WHAT'S NOT IN THE WORLD OF PLAYSTATION

OPM TOP 20

OPM's Top 20 Game Charts are compiled in association with: **GAME**

1	NE	TOCA WTC	.....	.CODEMASTERS
2	NE	TENCHU 2: BIRTH OF THE ASSASSINS	.....	.ACTIVISION
3	NE	SYDNEY 2000	.....	.EIDOS
4	NE	X-MEN MUTANT ACADEMY	.....	.ACTIVISION
5	NE	PARASITE EVE II	.....	.SQUARE
6	1	WWF SMACKDOWN	.....	.THQ
7	NE	CHASE THE EXPRESS	.....	.SCEE
8	2	COLIN MCRAE RALLY 2.0	.....	.CODEMASTERS
9	NE	RAYMAN 2	.....	.UBI SOFT
10	NE	FA PREMIER LEAGUE STARS 2001	.....	.EA
11	7	F1 2000	.....	.EA
12	4	WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP SNOOKER	.....	.CODEMASTERS
13	NE	FA PREMIER LEAGUE MANAGER 2001	.....	.EA
14	3	IN COLD BLOOD	.....	.SCEE
15	5	HOGS OF WAR	.....	.INFOGRAPHICS
16	9	MEDAL OF HONOUR	.....	.EA
17	NE	VIB RIBBON	.....	.SCEE
18	13	GRAN TURISMO 2	.....	.SCEE
19	17	CRICKET 2000	.....	.EA
20	NE	THEME PARK WORLD	.....	.EA

THREE TO BUY

That's what everyone else is buying right now. But what about you? Can't decide? Try these three fruity beauties for size...



DRIVER 2

Driving (OPM64 10/10)
Tanner's learnt to walk now, so you can climb out of your car and go hijack another. Against-the-clock gameplay is still the order of the day, but Tanner's shady missions are more varied, and the Vegas Strip/Latin American settings lend a spicy tang to the proceedings. A stroke of genius.



DAVE MIRRA FREESTYLE BMX

Bike sim (OPM64 8/10)
Not a mere Tony clone but a fully fledged extreme sports title in its own right. You really get the feel for riding a bike, and the stunts are as spectacular as you could want. Great for single and multiplayer fun, and the Proquest Mode is superb. Top two-wheeled action.



TENCHU 2: BIRTH OF THE ASSASSINS

ACTIVISION Stealth 'em up (OPM63 7/10)
If it takes stealthy shenanigans to float your boat, you'll take to *Tenchu 2* like a duck to water. Explore terrain and use it in your arsenal of stealth, nip up behind your foes and do 'em in, real quiet like. Varied missions and addictive gameplay make for a top gaming experience.



WHAT THE CELEBS ARE PLAYING

Creators of this summer's Balearic hit, *Body Groove*, it's Architechs

1. DRIVER
2. GRAN TURISMO 2
3. TEKKEN 3
4. MORTAL KOMBAT 4
5. V-RALLY



WHAT WE'RE PLAYING

The original Motorhead, OPM art ed Milford 'Lemmy' Coppock

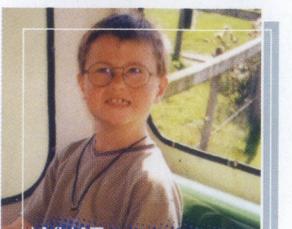
1. TONY HAWK'S 2
2. DRIVER 2
3. MOH: UNDERGROUND
4. ALIEN RESURRECTION
5. TOCA WTC



WHAT THEY'RE PLAYING

Steve Screech, lead programmer on Alex Ferguson's PM2001

1. DRIVER
2. ISS PRO EVOLUTION
3. APM2001
4. INTERNATIONAL TRACK AND FIELD 2
5. METAL GEAR SOLID



WHAT YOU'RE PLAYING

Frampton Cotterell's finest, young Frankie Plummer

1. METAL GEAR SOLID
2. SYPHON FILTER
3. WWF SMACKDOWN
4. GRAN TURISMO
5. TOMORROW NEVER DIES

GAME

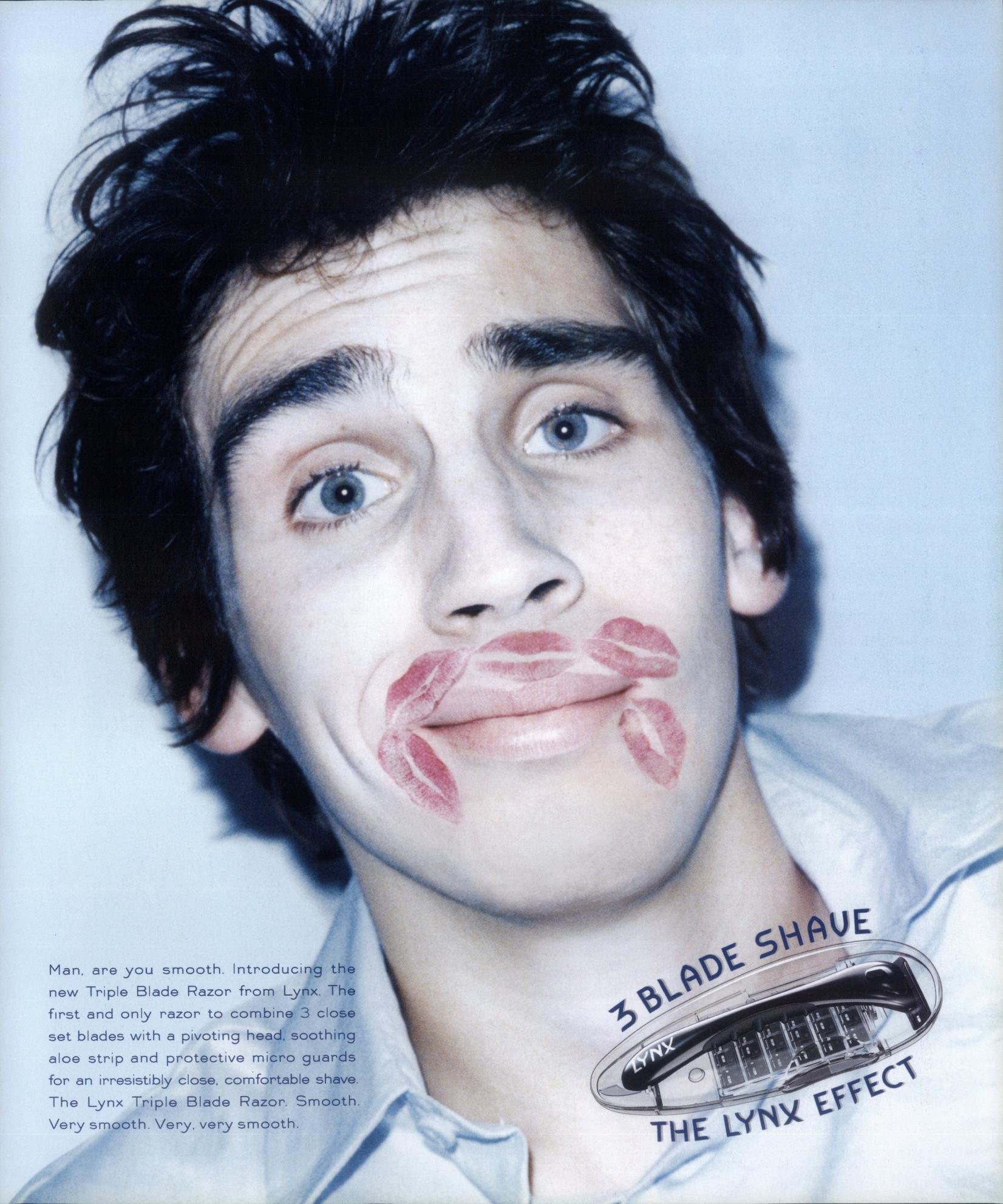
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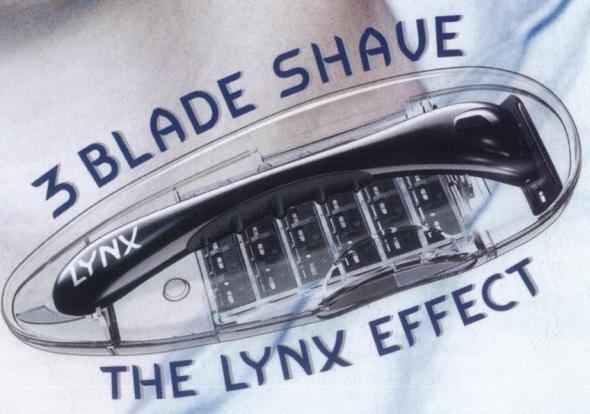
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ES AND PlayStation 2 COMING SOON



STUFFUM TANKUM HAMMERUM

NET-BURSTING PASSION.
TURF-SHREDDING PACE. AND
ABSOLUTE POWER OVER A LEGION
OF WORSHIPPERS. CAN YOU
STRUT WEARING STUDS?

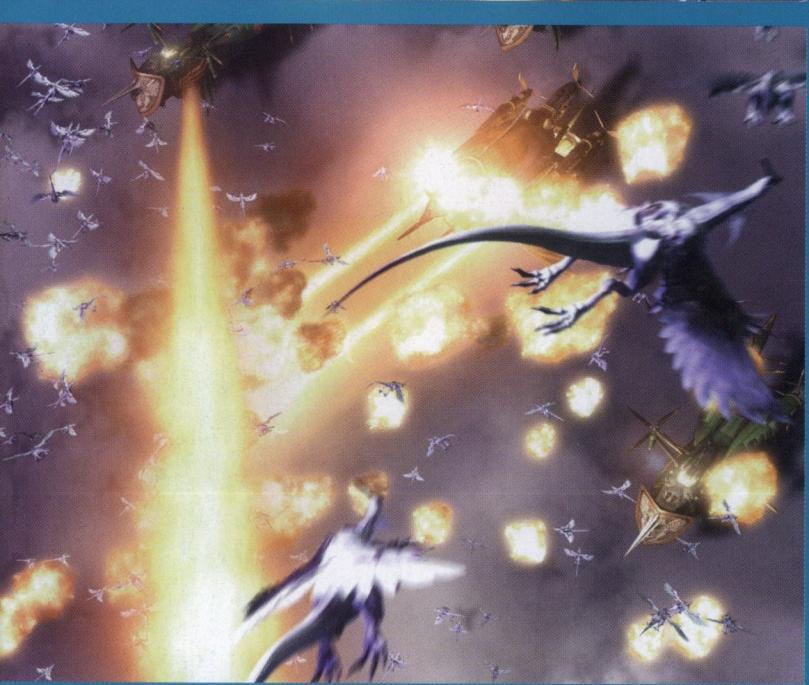


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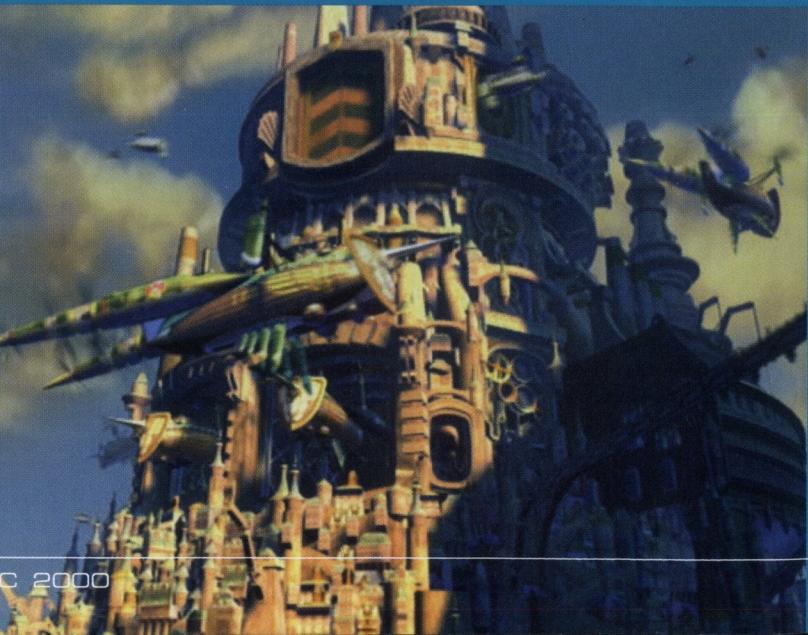
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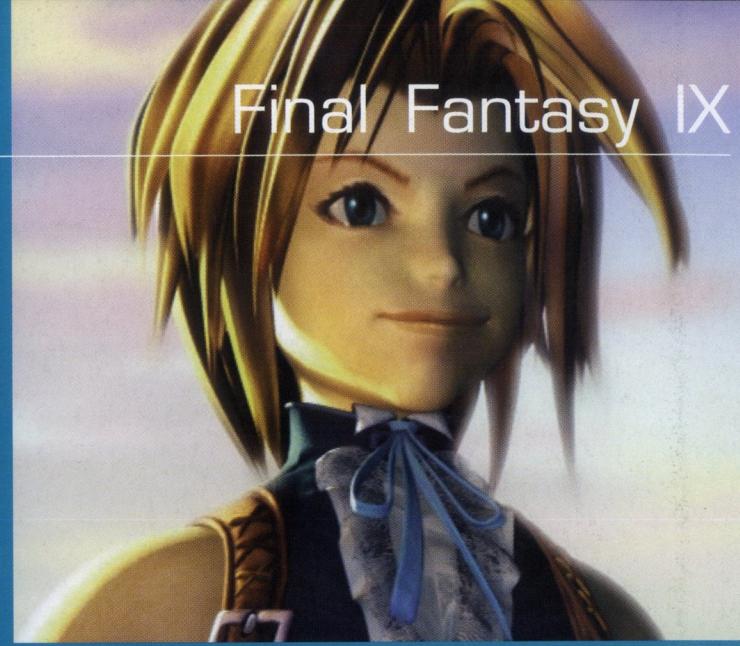


Words: Jamie Sefton

REAL FANTA

FINAL FANTASY IX MAY BE THE MONUMENTAL RPG'S BUT SQUARE HAS





FINAL FANTASY IX

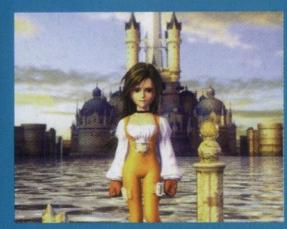
FINAL EPISODE ON PLAYSTATION 1
SAVED THE BEST UNTIL LAST

Final Fantasy has revolutionised the RPG genre, dragging it out of the mire of annoying orcs and wimpy wizards into a realm of unbridled imagination, gut-wrenching effects, wonderful characters and utterly immersing gameplay. *OPM* had an exclusive hands-on play of *FFIX*, interviewed the team and took a sneaky peak at PlayOnline – Square's vision for the future of RPGs.

As predicted, *FFIX* has a distinctly

different appearance to the previous two adventures. The sleek, cyber-punk structures and shiny, futuristic settings have been replaced with a more traditional, medieval look of rickety wooden houses and cobbled backstreets in the mould of a Grimm's Fairy Tale. According to art director Hideo Manaba, the designers "wanted to give the feeling of a series watershed, a sort of grand collection of what has come before".

The fantasy-orientated look, Manaba explained to *OPM*, was influenced by the key ►



FEATURE

LANGUAGE BARRIERS

YOUR GUIDE TO LAUGHING IN ALL THE WRONG PLACES AT THOSE ODD TRANSLATIONS

Although *Final Fantasy IX* is a wonderful game, it is sometimes difficult to grasp the significance of, for example, I Want To Be Your Canary, the play Zidane and his bandits perform for Queen Brahne. Apparently Square has a dedicated team of translators who try to convey in English the atmosphere and humour of the series as closely as possible. But occasionally jarringly phrases crop up that jump you out of the action because they are so misplaced, such as when the character of Baku calls his theatrical cast "little buggers" or when the 16-year-old Princess Garnet is referred to as a "babe-licious beauty".



► character of the black mage known as Vivi. Manaba said the change was made because he was concerned about "people getting tired of the same futuristic images from *FFVII*, *FFVIII* and the *FF* movie". However, the return of artist Yoshitaka Amano has had the most effect on the look of the game (see interview with Yuji Shibata), with his surreal paintings heavily sampled for the stunning graphics.

The storyline of Square's latest *Final Fantasy* opus begins with the shocking news that Queen Brahne of Alexandria has started using a magical monster army to terrorise neighbouring kingdoms. Hearing of this, the young thief Zidane and a rowdy group of outsiders set sail for Alexandria castle in the flying theatre ship

"The shiny, futuristic settings have been replaced with a medieval look"



Flashy Pants. Pyrotechnics aplenty as Zidane demonstrates another of *FFIX*'s dramatic battle sequences. PlayStation graphics have been pushed right to the limit

YUJI SHIBATA MANAGING DIRECTOR, SQUARE EUROPE

Final Fantasy is an incredible phenomenon in Japan and around the world.

What makes it so popular?

YS: We had massive success starting with the first *FF* through to number six on a mixture of platforms and then we moved on to PlayStation for *FFVII*. There used to be a limit on



the hardware with regard to graphics and sound, so the reason why we're having so much success with *VII*, *VIII* and especially *IX* in Japan is the combination of the great characters and improved 3D graphics.

OPM: The graphics and animations are stunning in *FFIX*. Has that been the main improvement or have you also refined the gameplay?

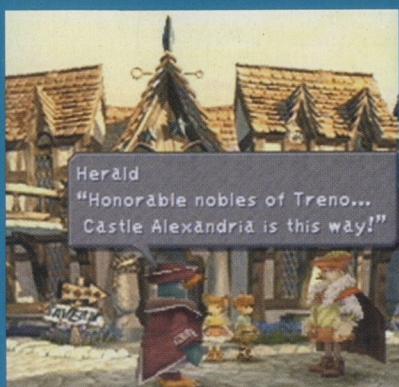
YS: The *FFVIII* team tried their best to get the most from the hardware and software. Each team, including those involved with *FFIX*, are always competing with each other to produce a different element of gameplay or advanced graphics technique, but of course they all share the resources of the company. *FFIX* had a team of over 100 people working for approximately a year and a half.

OPM: Has the Active Time Battle (ATB) system evolved over the last few *FF* games?

YS: Sure, it started from *IV* or *V* when Mr Ito developed ATB. We have added new things – such as player power-ups in *FFVIII* – to make it more enjoyable for the player. Square's trying different approaches to the battles, so you can change weapons during a fight or use blue, black or white magic for example.

OPM: Work on *FFIX* was begun when *FFVIII* was still being completed. Are there any themes that carry through both adventures?

"FF is a very positive series, with the battles of good and evil represented"



Speakeasy.
FFIX is packed with hours of character dialogue that helps create the 'medieval' olde worlde atmosphere of the game

"An inventive intro sets the scene for a game that holds constant surprises"

Prima Vista. The plan – to perform a play for Queen Brahne as a cover for rescuing/kidnapping the beautiful Princess Garnet. However, the heroes soon discover that it is a dark sorcerer called Kuja who is providing the once-placid monarch with weapons of destruction. So, the band of thieves, knights and sages begin a dangerous quest to discover Kuja's motives and save the world from oblivion.

The game opens with a stunning FMV sequence that rivals one of Walt's

creations, ending by throwing your character of Zidane into darkness. You wander about until you stumble into a candle, which when lit, illuminates a wooden room on the Prima Vista. *FFIX* is incredibly atmospheric and this inventive beginning sets the scene for a game with constant surprises.

Zidane and his friends then meet the criminal Baku for the first real battle in the game. Fighting is still a little fiddly, but now you have four characters to choose from and the spells are even ►

YS: Basically *Final Fantasy* celebrates life. The crystal is a homage to the life of the planet. Each of the adventures have different characters and worlds, but they all celebrate life. It's a very positive series, with the classic battles between good and evil represented in the games.

OPM: Yoshitaka Amano has returned to the series with *FFIX*...

YS: Yes. It is difficult to realise Amano-san's visualisation 100% in a game system, but we took

much of his conceptual drawings for the characters and backgrounds.

OPM: The look of the game has changed dramatically from *FFVIII*. Why?

YS: It was a conscious decision. *FFVII* and *FFVIII* were very cyber-punk, very sci-fi. We wanted *FFIX* to have a more traditional 'fantasy' look.

OPM: Do you take any inspiration from European mythology, such as King Arthur?

YS: Yes. Japanese people know about traditional myths, but *Final Fantasy* games took ingredients from *Ultima*, *Dungeons & Dragons* – we drew on many established myths, especially those from European culture.

OPM: PS 1 can link up to WAP phones. Will *FFIX* have any online elements?

YS: No, there are no plans for connectivity with *FFIX*, but, of course, we're beginning to look at online possibilities for the next in the *Final Fantasy* series. ■

FFIX – WHAT'S CHANGED?

ONCE MORE SQUARE HAS GIVEN THE SERIES MORE THAN A DAMN HARD TWEAKING



EIDOLONS

These are the Guardian Forces in *FFIX*, who are called into battle using the Summon command. Each has their own distinct personality and you'll remember a few of the more spectacular ones from *FFVIII*, including Odin, Leviathan, Carbuncle and Shiva.



ACTIVE TIME EVENT

An inspired addition that enables the player to see events that are happening elsewhere in the world simultaneously, providing additional information on the characters and storyline. You can view these ATEs when an option appears on-screen, or bypass them if you just want to get on with the game.



ON-SCREEN HELP

To avoid having to hopelessly bumble around screen, trying to interact with every bit of scenery and object, *FFIX* has added a superb system to make discovering on-screen items easier. Now if your character finds something of interest, an exclamation mark (item) or question mark (examine/action) will appear above their head. Brilliant.



FOUR-PLAY

FFIX allows up to four characters in a party. This introduces new strategy elements because each character has different abilities – for example, Steiner is handy in a sword fight, but useless in a duel of magic.



COMBAT

Like the previous *FFVII* and *FFVIII* adventures, an Active Time Battle (ATB) system has been included, with each character having different abilities depending on their job class. Action abilities are commands such as Steel, Black Magic and Summon, whereas Support abilities back up a character during battles with skills such as Auto-Potion and Chemist. However, Limit Breaks have now been replaced by a Trance Mode, which occurs when characters have been subjected to repeated physical attacks by an enemy. When the Trance gauge (located below the ATB bar) reaches maximum capacity, characters can perform more powerful attacks and receive less damage.



MINI GAMES

FFIX has a collection of eclectic mini games including Quina Quen's self-explanatory Catch The Frog and a fantastic Skipping Rope challenge, where characters can join in with a group of girls and attempt to skip the rope as many times as possible by pressing jump at the right time – great fun. The best rope athletes find their scores posted up on walls throughout Alexandria to ensure their 15 minutes of skipping fame.



CARD GAME

The addictive card game returns from *FFVIII*, albeit with simpler rules. Each card you collect has a number and arrows pointing in different directions. Players take it in turns to place five cards on a grid – if the arrows meet, they battle. If a card with an arrow is placed on the grid next to an opposition card without one, then the enemy card is 'flipped'. The winner is the player with the least overturned cards at the end.

FEATURE

PLAYONLINE

IN THE FUTURE GAMERS AROUND THE WORLD WILL UNITE TO SLAY DRAGONS AND CONSUME POTIONS

PlayOnline is Square's exclusive Internet service that will eventually host the next-generation *FFX* and *FFXI* games as well as sell music CDs and manga comics. According to Square Europe managing director Yuji Shibata, "We definitely see the future of RPGs as being online - in a virtual world. We need to find out how to communicate between countries with different languages, but we'll find a way."

The short PlayOnline promotional video gave a very good impression of what Square want for its groundbreaking RPG, *Final Fantasy XI*. It starts with an American teenage girl in her bedroom, sending an e-mail to her friend in the UK - a boy with an English accent that would make Dick Van Dyke blush. The pair enter an incredible, beautifully rendered 3D world and begin fighting together against an angry dragon.

After the battle, the Brit boy takes a breather to listen to music and check out the latest manga comics on the PlayOnline site. Meanwhile, the American girl contacts another friend who happens to be a street punk with attitude. He checks the mobile phone message and announces to his shady pals that he can't go to a party, because the girl "needs me".

Street Punk promptly goes to an arcade and uses a nifty-looking *Final Fantasy XI* machine to log in and join the other two gamers. His character appears in the virtual world and all three players go through a large door together, ready to take part in an exciting new *FF* episode. Although somewhat cheesy, the video did demonstrate Square's ambitious plans for a living, breathing online *Final Fantasy XI* world where players logging in from anywhere can join in amazing, immersive adventures. For a taste of what to expect check out www.playonline.com.

THE CAST LIST

MEET THE NEW CREW

ZIDANE TRIBAL (16 years old) A charismatic thief, with the skills of a master locksmith. Has a tail - although the reasons for this are unknown.



GARNET TIL ALEXANDROS XVII (16) A Princess in the Royal House of Alexandria. Rather spoilt and inexperienced, Garnet is about to embark on a life-changing adventure.



GARNET TIL ALEXANDROS XVII

EDWARD STEINER (33) Steiner is a knight who has been Princess Garnet's lifelong guardian. Brave, with excellent sword-wielding expertise.

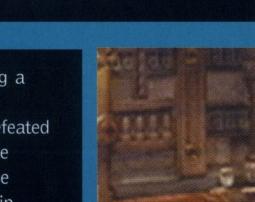


VIVI ORUNITIA (9) Vivi is a black mage - an outsider who lacks self-confidence and doesn't feel as if he belongs in this world.



VIVI ORUNITIA

FREYA CRESCENT (21) A courageous female knight, with mouse-like features. Banished from the land of Burmecia, she is strong and graceful, showing wisdom beyond her years.



FREYA CRESCENT



EIKO CAROL (6) Eiko is a child prodigy, who has learned White Magic, enabling her to summon giant monsters. Friendly with forest creatures called Moggles.



EIKO CAROL

QUINA QUEN



NON-PLAYABLE CHARACTERS

A MOTLEY BUNCH OF UNDESIRABLE MANIACS AND CRACKPOT INVENTORS

QUEEN BRAHNE Kind ruler of Alexandria who suddenly and inexplicably begins a campaign of terror against peaceful neighbouring kingdoms using an enchanted army of monsters. Has a beautiful daughter, Princess Garnet.

KUJA

The power behind the throne. He is a dark, evil sorcerer who provides Queen Brahne with her rampaging weapons of destruction. Kuja's true motives are unknown.

REGENT CID

Scientific genius and ruler of the kingdom of Lindblum. Inventor of spectacular flying machines, such as Baku's theatre ship, Prima Vista.

more spectacular - "Pyro" producing a mesmerising display of shimmering coloured light. After the fight, the defeated Baku explains his plan to capture the Princess, then another FMV sequence shows the propeller-driven theatre ship flying into the kingdom of Alexandria.

The action then switches to the young mage Vivi, who like the other controllable characters, can be moved smoothly around the town with the analogue stick.

"The camera view changes to add to the movie quality of the visuals"

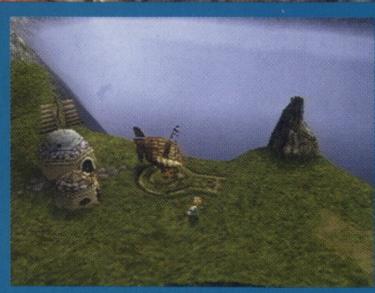
Alexandria has been marvellously realised, packed with wonky medieval buildings, wooden shop signs and intricate stained glass windows. The camera view changes on each street scene to add to the epic, movie quality of the visuals.

Vivi meets up with a 'rat kid' called Puck, who helps him sneak into the castle via a highly enjoyable arcade-style rooftop scramble. There's another switch of player



character back to Zidane and his troupe who begin the performance of their play, I Want To Be Your Canary for Queen Brahne and the adventure truly begins.

From what OPM has seen, *Final Fantasy IX* will set new standards for the PlayStation. The graphics are unsurpassed, the atmosphere compelling and the gameplay utterly engrossing. *IX* is the magic number. ■



Fantastic Worlds. *FFIX* gives players an unprecedented amount of freedom to explore the in-game locations

MIDWAY

Afro



*Sometimes being the best
means having to spend
a whole lot on Afro Sheen.*

Uh huh. That's right. The King of the Ring, Afro Thunder, returns with more style, moves, taunts and punishing soul. Plus a spectrum of new features await like 13 outrageous new boxers including 5 special characters and 10 returning contenders. It's intense, over-the-top boxing action. Come on. I know you feel it now. Let'sGetReadyTo Rumble™.

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BOXING** ROUND **2**



Train with
Mini Games



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Rumble Flurries



New Taunts, Combos
and Animations



23 Outrageous
Boxing Personalities



Sharper Single
Player Boxing



PlayStation 2

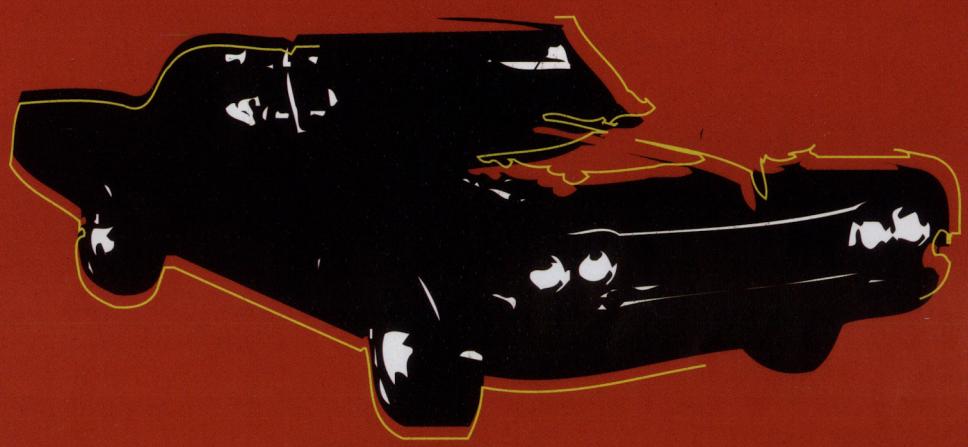


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*Screen shots taken from PlayStation 2

THERE'S A DEAL GOING DOWN...





THERE'S A DEAL GOING DOWN...

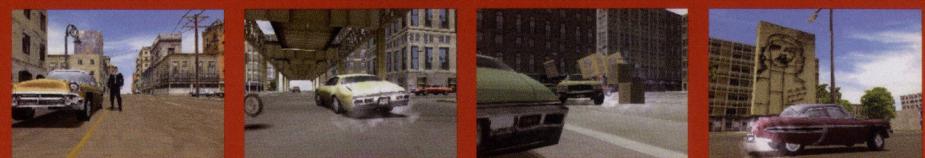
The DRIVER'S BACK...
BACK ON THE STREETS!





DRIVER²TM

BACK ON THE STREETS

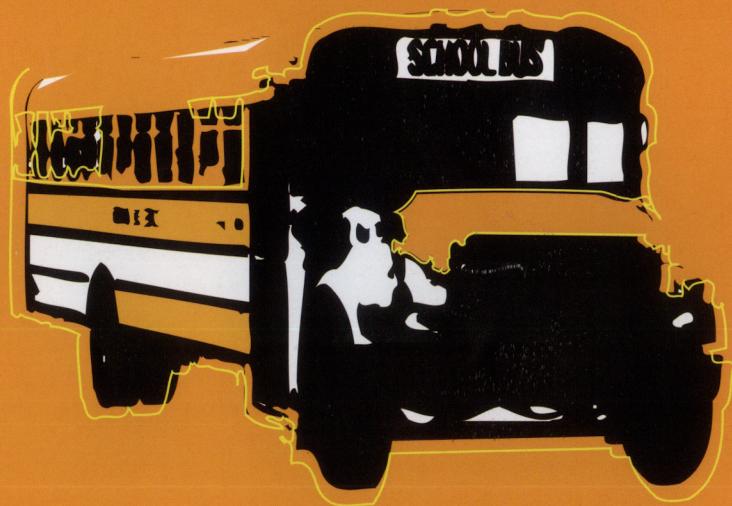


Street Date: 17th NOVEMBER





driver-2.com



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BACK ON THE STREETS



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BLUEPRINT

OPM PEEKS AT THE DRAWING BOARDS OF THE PLANET'S TOP DEVELOPERS TO BRING YOU NEXT YEAR'S GAMES FIRST

DECEMBER 2000

INSIGHT

Ted Carron

Lead programmer on Codemasters' mighty Multiplayer Network



What is the Codemasters Multiplayer Network (CMN) and when can we use it?

It's a facility that allows PlayStation 2 gamers to play against PC, WAP and X-Box users online. The multi-format set up will give you a chance to prove who's the best on a level playing field. CMN will be formally active on 24 November [PS2 launch day], but you'll have to wait until next year, when you have a modem and a hard drive for your PS2, before you can join in.

How will it work and what games will use CMN?

Technically CMN doesn't allow machines to talk to one another. Instead there's a central server that allows games to be run simultaneously on various machines. The ideal number of competitors is four and things kick off with *Insane* on the PC, an off-road racing game. You'll be able to play all future Codemasters games with CMN capabilities, and our racing expertise will mean many of them will be ideal for the medium. Competition is based on skill ladders with, say, eight rungs. If you win on one rung you'll progress to the next and compete in games at pre-arranged times.

If you have a slow computer will that affect the visuals on opponents' consoles?

Not at all. Because players are not directly connected, the game is always running at the same speed. If you have a slower machine you are simply seeing the wrong picture, so that isn't really a consideration.

What happens if someone is cheating?

Everyone has a profile that lists how many foul games they've been involved in, that's games where complaints of cheating have been made. Other players will avoid people who keep cropping up. Similarly, excellent games will be flagged up so you can play strong competitors. It's worth noting too that no machine will out-perform the other.

How important is this device for breaking the 'geeky' stigma of online gaming?

Very. Online gaming is often seen as the reserve of nerds. The competitiveness that underpins CMN will draw in all gamers.

How important are broadband networks to the future of facilities like this?

Broadband as such is not crucial to, say, the number of players, but all the advances being made will allow us to push things further. For instance, I can see a time when we can have real-time in-game speech, so you can jeer your opponents as you pass them!

Lee Hall



Fear Effect: Retro Helix



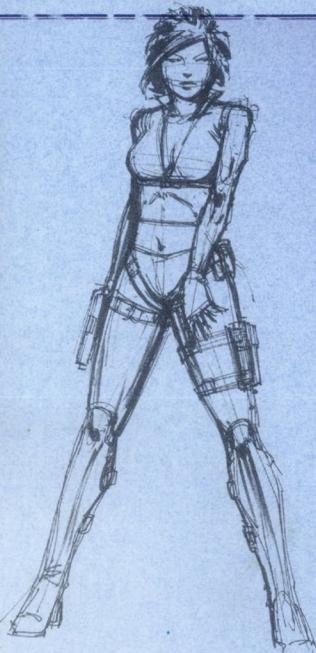
The Mission



Rainbow Six Rogue Spear



Hellboy



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Fear Effect: Retro Helix 36

A prequel to the almost brilliant *Fear Effect*, *Retro Helix* shows how it all started for Hana, Deke and Glas

The Mission 38

Can a game based on an advert – even a very cool Nike advert – be any good? We take an early look...

Rainbow Six Rogue Spear 40

Rainbow Six was more Old Bill than SAS, *Rogue Spear* aims to put it right, Special Forces-style

Round Up 42

Warriors Of Light And Magic, *Time Crisis Project Titan*, *Dancing Stage Euro Mix*, *Hellboy* and yet more...

NAME:

FEAR EFFECT: RETRO HELIX

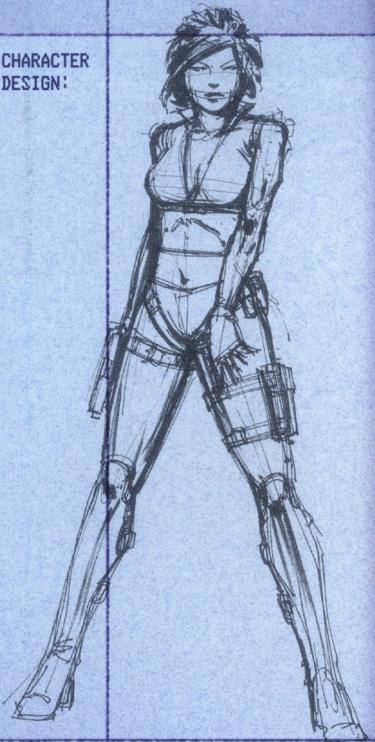
NOTE:

FEARLESS? THEN HAVE ANOTHER HELPING OF SCARY ORIENTAL ACTION

PRODUCT SPECIFICATION

STYLE:	Action adventure
PUBLISHER:	Eidos
DEVELOPER:	Kronos
RELEASE DATE:	Early 2001

CHARACTER DESIGN:



COMPLETE: 60%

QUOTE:

"You can use the flame-thrower to burn off the flesh of the baddies"



Urinal, m'lord. You catch up with the baddies in some decidedly unglamorous and smelly surroundings



Barred.
The shadowy twilight world you inhabit will lead you into some dodgy dives and swanky haunts. Lucky people

CHINA SYNDROME

One of the best things about the first *Fear Effect* was its lovingly detailed oriental setting, steeped in Chinese mythology and brought to life by anime-style graphics. All of this made a welcome change from the game-character-infested streets of the Bronx. Knowing which side its prawn toast is buttered on, *Retro Helix* follows suit.

The game kicks

off in a shadowy alternate Hong Kong, where we discover the origins of the characters. We then move briefly to New York City – there's no escaping it – before speeding back round the world to the Walled City of Xi'an, the lost tomb of the First Emperor of China (which presumably means it's no longer lost), and finally Penglai Shan, the 'legendary'

mountain-island of the immortals.

The game's final chapter involves a spectacular showdown between the beautiful Rain and her evil (naturally) twin sister, Mist. We won't spoil it for you by saying who wins, but you might want to wonder why, if Rain is meant to be such a devoted 'friend' of Hana, she didn't show up for *Fear Effect* 1...



Bullet bonanza. Armed to the teeth with nifty little guns and heavy weapons, subtlety is sometimes off the menu

Like its predecessor, *Fear Effect: Retro Helix* is a *Resident Evil*-style adventure, with the violence being perpetrated against animated backgrounds spooled from the disc. And, like its predecessor, it's set firmly in the Far East.

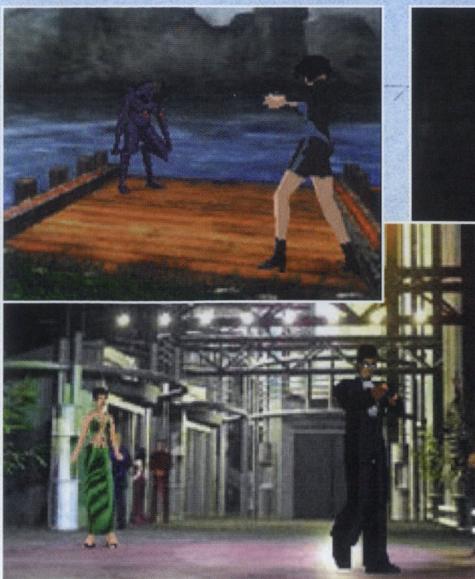
Weirdly, however, rather than continuing the story that began in the first game, *Retro Helix* actually takes place before it. (That's *Retro* as in backward-looking, you see, and *Helix* as in, erm, shatterproof rulers.) So what's going on? You there! Yes, you – Tom Marx, game producer for Eidos.

"Well, we felt there was a certain amount of background we didn't explain about the main characters in the first game," says Marx. "How did Hana, Deke and Glas first join forces? What made these mercenaries what they were in *Fear Effect*? These questions and more are answered in *Retro Helix*."

According to Marx, *FERH* will be just the second instalment of a huge *Fear Effect* saga, culminating in a final game that'll reveal the truth behind all the triad/mythology/assassin tomfoolery. So you won't want to miss out.

Now, a sequel wouldn't be a sequel – even when it's a prequel – without a fresh arsenal to select your piece from, and *Retro Helix* duly delivers. "There are some cool new weapons in the game for both close combat and overkill situations," Marx reveals. "New close range weapons include a taser that'll stun your enemy with some high voltage. We've included an EMP weapon to disable electronic machinery for a short time, but long enough to dismantle them with the new grenade launcher. You can also use the flame-thrower to burn off the flesh of the baddies when you need to."

It sounds as if we're assured another dose of the ultra-violence and general mischief that



Fashion unconscious. As well as sleek stealth outfits, this year's collection boasts this beautiful Lilt-lady two-piece

pervaded the original, then. And helping to administer will be a new playable character, Rain Qin, who'll back up Hana, Deke and Glas. She's no old trout, either, according to Stan Liu, director of the game for developer Kronos.

"Rain is beautiful and extremely intelligent," enthuses Liu. "She's Hana's partner and close friend." Blimey. "The relationship and the chemistry between Rain and Hana is what makes her fun to play."

It's just as well Rain's joined the gang, because they'll be up against a gleaming new range of baddies. "We've redone the animation, art and artificial intelligence for all of them," Marx adds. "AI is much improved over the first game – you'll be able to see the varying reactions of each baddie, whether it's a Fixer or student, a security guard or cat-eye."

Which is all very well, but those who played the first game – accomplished though it was –

will be hoping to see one or two issues addressed. Like, for example, those irksome reloading delays that occur each time you die. "They're gone," Liu assures us. How about that Resident-Evil-in-reverse control system, which took more than a little getting used to? "There's an extra set of control schemes called 3D Controls."

"And that's not all," Liu continues. "We've revamped the engine to support 3D environment objects and hazards. We've added real-time, dynamic light spheres so that the player and enemies can hide in shadows. Once again, we've got professional voice actors doing the characters' voices. We've got all-new music and sound effects tailored specifically for each location and situation. The list goes on..."

Not here it doesn't. But we'll bring you more on Retro Helix in the months ahead. ■

Jonathan Davies



Grit 'em. Hold on to your hats, there's gonna be a fire fight. Yaah!

DESIGN PROFILE

LOGO:



NAME: Stan Liu

JOB TITLE: Director

HISTORY: Liu worked on the first *Fear Effect*, along with Eidos producer Tom Marx

INFLUENCES:

Liu looked to films such as *Ghost In The Shell*, *Akira* and *Ninja Scroll* for the game's look. The action is inspired by the likes of John Woo and Tsui Hark

OTHER INFORMATION

WEB SITE:

www.kronosdigital.com



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BLUEPRINT

NAME:

THE MISSION

NOTE:

A VIDEOGAME
BASED ON A NIKE
ADVERT - IT WAS
ONLY A MATTER
OF TIME...

PRODUCT SPECIFICATION

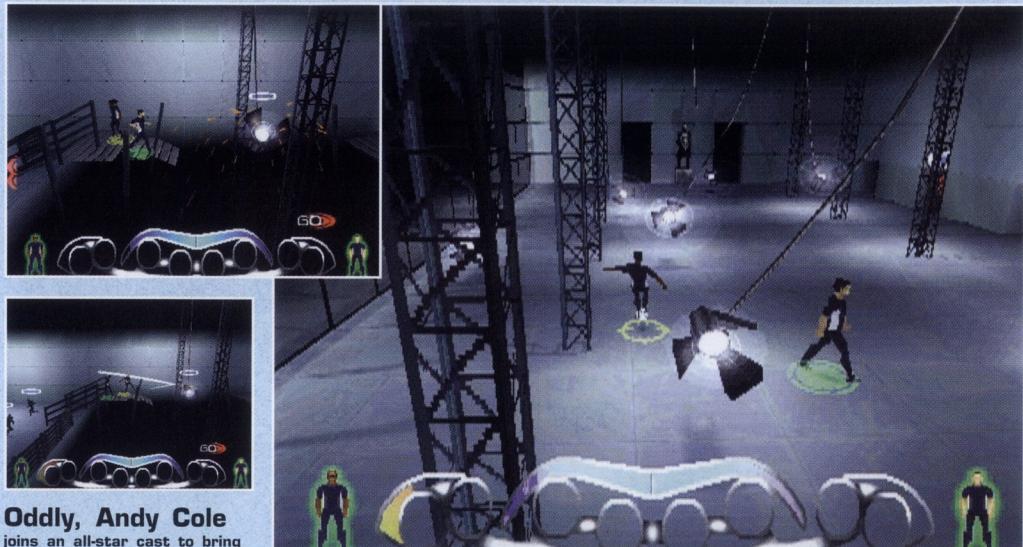
STYLE:	Football/combat game
PUBLISHER:	Microids
DEVELOPER:	In-house
RELEASE DATE:	December
COMPLETE:	80%

Nike is one of the most recognisable brand names in the world, and everyone but Stevie Wonder has seen the futuristic advert where robot ninjas have stolen a football. You know, the one where Edgar Davids won't cover his delicious hair in a hat, even if it puts his life in danger.

It turns out that Nike envisaged a videogame from day one, and went straight to Microdroids to make it happen. Gaming veterans will remember some lamentable '80s advert/videogames crossovers (um, *Tony Tiger* anyone?), so we spoke to *The Mission's* project manager Jeff Cagna in an attempt to be convinced that this was a good idea.

"The gameplay is basically the same as football with an element of combat. All the action takes place in this strange building where the ninjas, representing all that is bad in football, are keeping the stolen Geo Merlin ball. The objective is to beat them by doing football tricks." OK, but what do you actually do?

"The players can pass the ball to each other to avoid enemies and reach certain places in the game using standard football skills. The combat element enters when they use special combos. A player can decide, for example, to



Oddly, Andy Cole
joins an all-star cast to bring
a really rather good advert
to your PlayStation. But will
it make a good game?

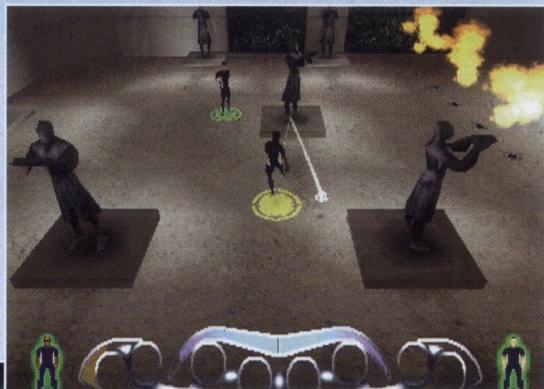
do two jumps in the air, or change the ball into a ball of fire and use it as a weapon." So, you get rid of the ninjas, get the ball, protect your team mates and get out of the level. Example?

"A typical sequence would be, say, two players enter a room. When they cross a laser beam, ninjas appear. You can tackle them or use the ball as a weapon – dribbling, passing, headers and combos are all necessary to prevent the ninjas getting the ball. To exit the room, some switches must be pulled. The only way of moving these switches is to shoot the ball at them. But while moving in the room, players are hit by flames, lasers and toxic gas. All the time they must use their football skills to retain the ball."

It's certainly a twist on the usual football formula and with the assistance of Nike, Davids, Andy Cole, Luis Figo, Guardiola, Kanu and a special appearance from coach Louis van Gaal, *The Mission's* originality could capture the minds of imaginative gamers. But football's a funny old game, and while we don't want to sit on the fence, we can't predict which way this one's going to go, Des. ■

Steve Owen

QUOTE: "They must use their football skills to retain the ball"



Killer free-kick. Footballs are your weapons in this game of death and trickery

DESIGN PROFILE

COMPANY:	Microids
NAME:	Jeff Cagna
JOB TITLE:	Project manager
HISTORY:	Cagna has only recently joined Microdroids, but the team has been involved in titles across all formats
INFLUENCES:	The only real influence for the game was the Nike advert itself, although the team looked at plenty of footie titles

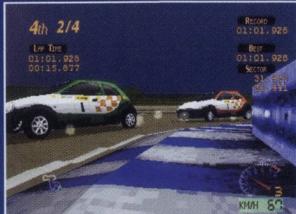
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SPEED
THRILLS**



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DRIVEN your car?



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BLUEPRINT

NAME:

RAINBOW SIX ROGUE SPEAR

NOTE:

SHOOT THE BAD GUYS AND SAVE THE HOSTAGES. IT COULD ALMOST BE A BOOK...

PRODUCT SPECIFICATION

STYLE:	Action-strategy
PUBLISHER:	Ubisoft
DEVELOPER:	Red Storm/Saffire
RELEASE DATE:	February
COMPLETE:	80%



Planning missions is an important part of *Rogue Spear*, although you can defend the free world with pre-set plans as well

Your chance to take charge of an elite band of special forces operatives is about to crash through the doors with the arrival of *Rainbow Six Rogue Spear* for PlayStation. "Rogue Spear isn't your typical first-person shooter," says Elizabeth Loverso, operations manager at Red Storm, the company novelist Tom Clancy set up to develop games based on his novel *Rainbow Six*.

Clancy oversaw development of the highly acclaimed PC version of *Rainbow Six* but the PlayStation version – which, like *Rogue Spear*, was converted by the Saffire Corporation – was poorly received (OPM52 5/10). Loverso promises *Rogue Spear* will be far better. "No longer will you mind-numbingly search for the end of a level," she told OPM. Other changes – a one-shot kill, for instance – should help to flesh out the always intriguing emphasis on planning missions, as opposed to all-out killing sprees.

Gameplay revolves around 18 missions where, according to Loverso, you have to "take out bad guys while saving hostages, lose one hostage and the mission is a failure". You control one member of a team at a time. Each group consists of four soldiers picked from a group of 40 individuals. This pool of soldiers is divided

into five types: demolition experts, snipers, reconnaissance specialists, electronics boffins and assault troops.

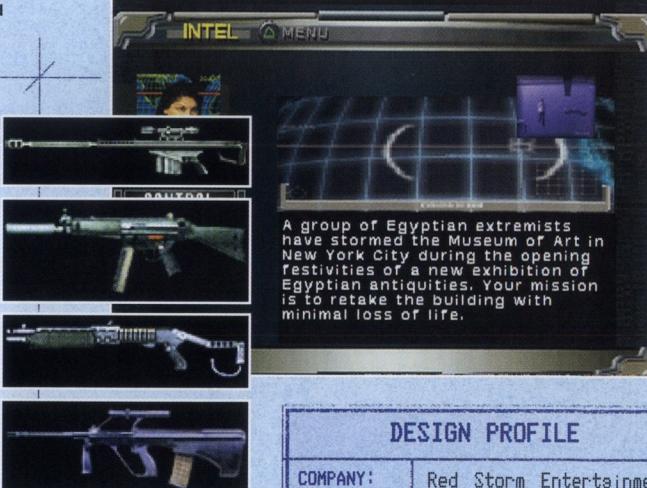
But the real narrative drive comes not from the soldiers, but from the external plot – as outlined in the cut-scenes and by the mission briefing you get from senior officer John Clark before each mission. "Rogue Spear encourages you to spend time in the 'fluff', which contains the storyline," Loverso says. "We tried to get the player involved with the 'why am I doing this?'

There are 25 different weapons, including sniper rifles, silenced handguns, shotguns and various grenades. But Loverso is keen to emphasise the need for stealth to get you through the missions. "It's a large part of the game," she says, citing the use of 'heat vision', which aids your secretive advance against the enemy by allowing you to see through walls.

As well as the Story Mode there is a Two-Player Option, which is split into four games – Survival, Scatter Assassination (the first player to find a hostage and get him out safely wins), VIP Escort and Assassination (you hide your hostage and hunt the other player's).

This could be a really loveable *Rogue...*

Lee Hall



Arsenal score.
With terrorists on the loose there's plenty of hardware to pick up

DESIGN PROFILE

COMPANY:	Red Storm Entertainment
NAME:	Elizabeth Loverso
JOB TITLE:	Development manager
HISTORY:	Formerly with Acclaim Entertainment, <i>Rogue Spear</i> is Loverso's first project for Red Storm
INFLUENCES:	Unsurprisingly, Red Storm looked to <i>Metal Gear Solid</i> for stealth and the <i>Command & Conquer</i> series for strategy elements

QUOTE: "Lose one hostage and the mission is a failure"



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BLUEPRINT

NAME:

ROUND UP

PRODUCT DETAIL



DANCING STAGE EURO MIX

Shipping with a dance mat, *Dancing Stage Euro Mix* will have you grooving on down to Boyzone, Cameo and Gloria Gaynor's *I Will Survive*. Go girl!

OTHER INFORMATION

Web sites to visit for game overload...

Daily Radar

www.dailyradar.com

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A SNEAKY PEEK AT THE GAMES ALMOST READY FOR THE SHELVES. HERE BE THE LOWDOWN

PREVIEWS

DECEMBER 2000



OPM HUNTS DOWN THE GAMES THAT HAVE GONE MISSING IN ACTION

Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX

Activision

More annoying than a scab that won't heal, the release of *Matt Hoffman's Pro BMX* has been delayed until early 2001. Never mind, that gives us an extra few months to perfect those frontside-overcrook-crossbar stumps on the awesome *Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2*.

Crash Bash 046
On the cover disc this issue, multiplayer madness to kickstart any PlayStation party

The Mummy 048
Those nasty little beetle things take a holiday from *TR4* to nibble your ankles in this film tie-in

Chicken Run 050
The poultry is revolting so it's time to fly the coop. Last one out gets turned into a pie

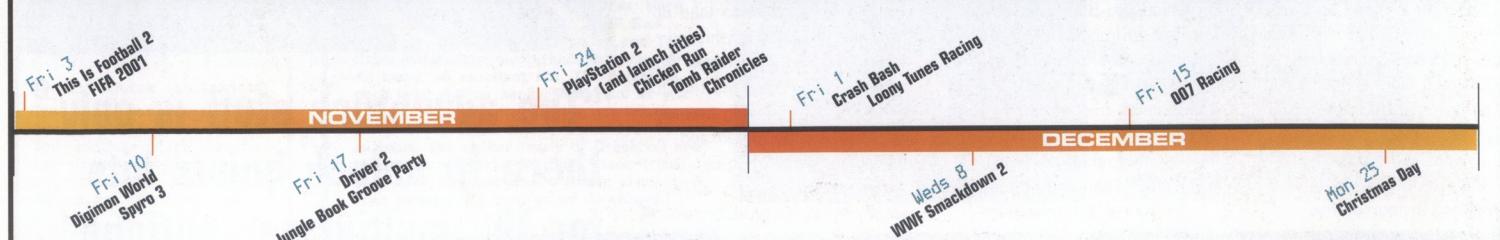
Alex Ferguson's Player Manager 2001 052
New signing Alex Ferguson leads the ever popular footie-management sim into the title race

The Grinch 054
Christmas capers with a Jim Carrey cartoon movie spin-off. It sounds bad but it's surprisingly good

ISS 056
It's a new *ISS* game, but it's not the sequel to *Pro Evolution*. Confused? Let us explain...

INCOMING...

SOME OF THE GAMES (AND A CERTAIN BLACK CONSOLE) YOU CAN LOOK FORWARD TO OVER THE NEXT COUPLE OF MONTHS

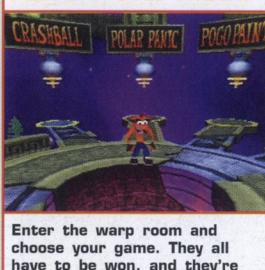




Crash Bash

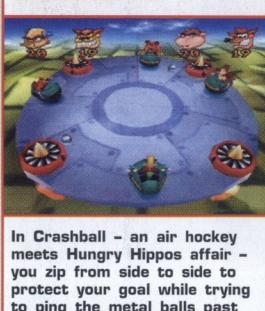
LUNATIC LUDO ON POGO STICKS, POLAR BEAR RODEO AND MINIATURE-TANK BATTLES? LOOKS LIKE CRASH HAS TAKEN A BASH TO THE HEAD

ADVENTURE MODE



Enter the warp room and choose your game. They all have to be won, and they're all crazy.

CRASHBALL



In Crashball - an air hockey meets Hungry Hippos affair - you zip from side to side to protect your goal while trying to ping the metal balls past your four opponents.



Everyone's favourite bandicoot returns, weary no doubt, from his days tearing about in karts for *Crash Team Racing*. The spin this time around is that *Crash Bash* is utterly, utterly insane.

The title is made up of a series of mini-games which warp Crash into some thoroughly bizarre and highly entertaining situations, collecting the usual array of trophies and prizes for his cabinet as he goes.

Each level involves competing in four or five different tournaments against

the usual Crash crew. The intro level gives you taste enough of what's to come: there's Polar Panic, a sumo wrestling/rodeo-ride crossbreed where polar bears replace Wild West beasts. Then there's Crashball, a four-way air-hockey-in-dodgems affair in which you blast iron balls around an impossibly small arena. Pogo-prancing, dynamite-throwing and tank duels make up some of the rest of the action. The challenges remain similar throughout but get trickier to beat as you continue.

Of course, the adventure stuff is only there to unlock

bonus bits for the multiplayer options. In truth, *Crash Bash* is a party game more than anything and what's going to make it a truly top title is the opportunity for chaotic competition with your mates. So, if you're lounging around looking for a game to load up for some good, old-fashioned four-player fun then *Crash Bash* is what you've been waiting for. With cramped playing arenas, fast and furious action and games steeped in humour, this sequel should be every bit as satisfying as its predecessors. ■

Nick Ellis



"The adventure stuff is only there to unlock bonus bits for the multiplayer options"



BATTLE MODE CHOICE

CHOOSE LEVEL
PRESS LEFT RIGHT TO CHANGE ARENA
POGO PANDEMOMIUM

PRESS UP DOWN TO CHANGE LEVEL
PRESS X TO SELECT

POGO A GOGO

CRASH

Choose from four arenas in which to bounce around or batter your friends.



Choose from four arenas in which to bounce around or batter your friends.

TOURNAMENT MODE

Play through 12 rounds of Tournament to reign supreme and unlock more goodies.

SPEED BOOTS

To stand the best chance of victory, acquire some speed boots and hurtle round the arena like an Olympic-medal-winning wallaby.

CRATE CRUSH RULES

1:00
RULES
WIN BY BEING THE LAST STANDING OR HAVING THE MOST HEALTH WHEN TIME RUNS OUT
KICKS CANNED
PICKS UP AND THROWS CRATES
COLLECT FRUIT TO INCREASE YOUR HEALTH

The rules are quite simple. Pick up the boxes, throw 'em at your mates and laugh as they bow out under a blast of dynamite.



CRATE CRUSH

1:16

Keep your distance from the others, munch away on the doctor's favourite fruit, and sit back and collect the trophy.



DYNAMITE DERBY

1:06

Throwing boxes of dynamite about the arena can cause serious competitor casualties - it's true, violence is fun.



The mini games may all be variants on a theme (surreal, manic, four-player action) but each has its own freakish sideshow attraction. Surely the RSPCA would have something to say about the Bare-Back Polar Rodeo (left)

HOW TO WARP AHEAD...



To fully enjoy the four-player Tournament and Battle Modes, you need to finish the adventure and unlock the hidden treasures. Each level comprises five events before facing the obligatory big, bad boss. Here we have Barmy Beach Ball, WWF Box-Throwing, Seal-Dodging, Pogo-ing and Tank Attax before the mysterious Bearminator! All loopy, all excellent fun. The games in each level run on similar lines but as you continue the adventure, they get trickier to complete as extra twists are added. For example, the earlier levels of Crashball are nice and straightforward but toward the end you'll be playing on a tilting arena with fans blowing the balls in all directions.

OPINION

+ POINTS

- POINTS

! ADVANCE WARNING

The Bandicoot engine has been refined once again for another slice of top-notch multiplayer entertainment. The Adventure Mode may not live up to the previous titles, but that's not what Crash Bash is about at all

Publisher: Konami

Developer: Rebellion

Number of players: One

Release date: November

The Mummy

WALK LIKE AN EGYPTIAN. OR LIKE A NANCY, IF YOU SO DESIRE.
ANYTHING'S POSSIBLE IN THE MURKY WORLD OF *THE MUMMY...*

DEEP DEPRESSIONS

Keep an eye on these depressions in the wall - many conceal treasure and other goodies, and they often contain hidden switches.

GUBBINS

Tap **■** at any time and this little bar will pop up temporarily, detailing how many lives you have left, how much treasure you've collected and the ammo count of your selected weapon.



The Mummy: an undeniably daft movie. It was *Indiana Jones* with a bit of tongue-in-cheek humour stirred in, and as such it was watchable and, on occasion, entertaining.

And it seems Rebellion has taken the 'informal' approach to the movie's PlayStation tie-in too. Our man Rick O'Connell doesn't so much run as mince about. With a thousand tons of sweating stone bearing down on him, surrounded by the grandeur and menace of an ancient race, and all of it accented by a

sweeping film-worthy score, Rick fair wiggles his way about in true John Inman fashion.

Essentially, *The Mummy* is a *Tomb Raider*-esque affair, with lots of exploration, secret-hunting and undead-boshing. All the basic elements are there - jump, climb and shimmy controls, a sort of rolling strafe command to keep your man out of harm's way, and a look button so you can examine your surroundings in greater detail. Even Lara's trademark twin-shooters have been slipped in.

That's where the similarities end, though. The game engine

works in a completely different way to *Tomb Raider*'s: it's considerably speedier, and you can hoof it around the levels at quite a rate. The environments are a lot more enclosed too - you never quite know what kind of ancient rag-wrapped crustiness is waiting around the next corner to hug you to death.

Puzzle-solving is definitely the order of the day, and while most are of the switch-opens-door variety, the method is often quite unusual. It takes a fair bit of hunting around to find that elusive secret switch. To this end, you find yourself pushing

"Tomb Raider-esque, with lots of exploration, secret-hunting and undead-boshing"

statues, rearranging mosaics and using lit torches on reactive panels to reveal hidden goodies and the road ahead.

The graphics are progressing nicely, with plenty of hieroglyphs and ancient Egyptian statuary adorning the tombs. The characters aren't bad either, being recognisable enough from

their silver-screen origins. Our only gripe with the visuals is that the draw distance is minuscule. Maybe that's to add to the tension, but we suspect it's to keep the frame rate chipper. Still, *The Mummy* looks pretty tasty - get the skinny in our full review next month. ■

Al Bickham

The Mummy



HERE COMES A CANDLE

Rick's standard item of equipment is his torch. It can be used to illuminate your way, revealing hidden items and areas, and to light panels which garner extra lives.

FLAME-GRILLED

These flaming brands aren't just for decoration. They provide fire for Rick's torch, which burns for a limited period before snuffing itself out. It's good to keep a mental note of where they are or he'll end up with a free nose job, courtesy of a brick wall.

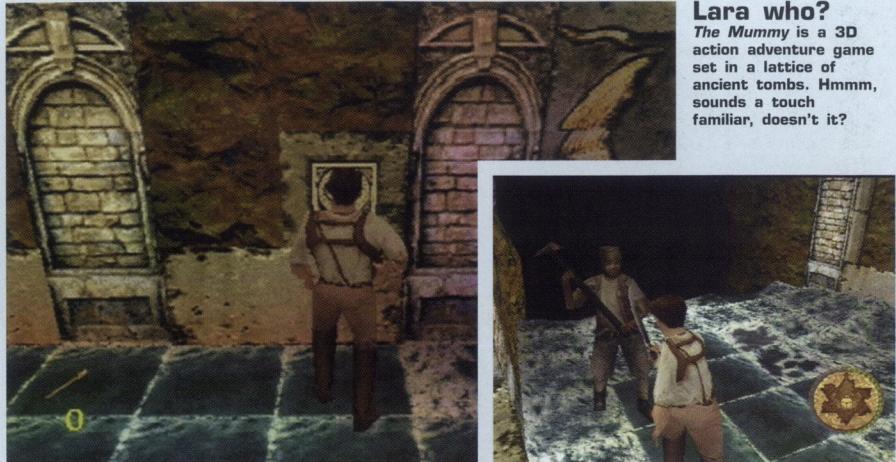


MINCE BEEFCAKE



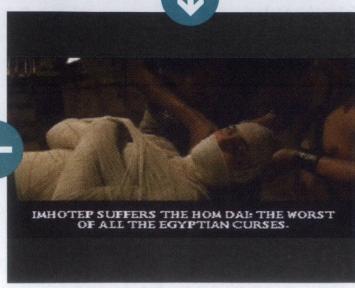
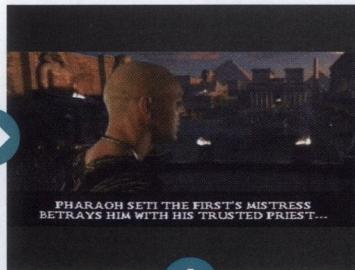
Rick Connell, at your service. No job is too large or too small for this man. Apart from walking with a manly swagger - that's definitely beyond him.

Unstable scenery.
As in all good *Indiana Jones* escapades, you'll find yourself sprinting past falling columns and loosely tethered swords



MUMMY'S BOY

IMHOTEP'S BEEN A BAD BOY. HERE'S WHY...



OPM OPINION

+ POINTS

- Light-hearted
- Good-looking
- Fast-paced

- POINTS

- Titchy draw distance
- 'Whimsical' animations
- Funny walks

! ADVANCE WARNING

Fun so far, but not without its faults. There are some questions about how repetitive the gameplay could become, as all you seem to do is run around, open doors and kill stuff. But we'll reserve judgement until next month.

If you were the pharaoh's most trusted aide, you wouldn't muck about with his missus, would you? That's exactly what Imhotep, High Priest of Osiris, has been up to. The big man catches wind of this, and Imhotep has to face the music in the nastiest possible way. He's taken to the ancient city of Hamunaptra, wrapped in bandages and buried alive in a sarcophagus filled with ravenous, flesh-eating scarab beetles. They suck out all his juice but Imhotep remains alive - after a fashion. Cursed to eternity as one of the living dead, he has no hope of reaching the after life. Then a certain group of adventurers comes along and disturbs his sleep...

Lara who?
The Mummy is a 3D action adventure game set in a lattice of ancient tombs. Hmmm, sounds a touch familiar, doesn't it?

Publisher: Eidos Interactive

Developer: Blitz Games

Number of players: One

Release date: Late November

Chicken Run

METAL GEAR SOLID WITH POULTRY? MAYBE NOT, BUT IS THIS THE GAME THAT'LL MAKE YOU FEEL LIKE CHICKEN TONIGHT?

IDIOT BUTTONS

The game displays the buttons needed for a particular task – an innovation that shows how much *Chicken Run* is aimed at younger gamers.

PIEMAN

Mr Tweedy caught you!

Dumb, under the thumb, farmer Mr Tweedy wants to put you and your clucking chums into a pie and make a large profit for his wife. All you have to do is avoid him and his dogs.

KILLER VEG

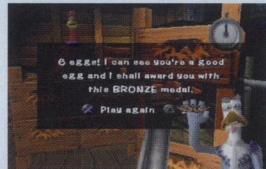
More like 'distracting' veg, as throwing sprouts makes any of the Tweedy's nasty hounds scamper after the leafy bait – rather than your ankles.

- Throw Sprout
- ✗ Jump
- Action
- △ Inventory



SUB-GAMES

Strolling about the farmyard can get a bit samey, so *Chicken Run* includes lots of sub-games, such as catching eggs, and disguising yourself as the farmer's wife and releasing the chickens.



CUT-SCENES

Not only does *Chicken Run* incorporate cut-scenes taken from the movie (above), it also includes sequences specifically designed for the game (top).

RADAR

The tin. Shows what the farmer and his dogs see, à la *Metal Gear Solid*.



"You must sneak your way around the farmyard, avoiding the patrolling farmer"

The film on which this game is based was often described as *The Great Escape* with chickens. The equivalent in videogame terms is to call this stealth 'em up *Metal Gear Solid* with, er, poultry.

Chicken Run gives you control of Ginger, Rocky, Nick or Fetcher as they attempt to escape the clutches of evil farm owners Mr and Mrs Tweedy, to avoid being served up as pies.

You must sneak your way around the farmyard, avoiding the patrolling farmer, his wife and their dogs, and attempt to

pick up various farmyard collectables that can be used to help you fly the coop forever. Sticks, scissors, boots, all get put to use in various ingenious escape attempts – such as disguising hens as the farmer's wife and making a run for it.

There are several sub-games in which you try to release as many chickens from the farm within a time limit. You can use catapults, see-saws and fireworks to propel your buddies over the fence to freedom.

Look out for the full review next issue. ■

Craig Pearson

OPINION

+ POINTS

- Good replay value
- Great licence
- Fun for all

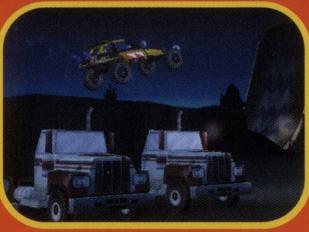
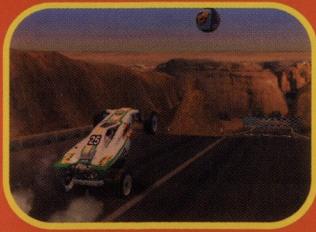
- POINTS

- A bit simple
- Lots of wandering
- Unoriginal

! ADVANCE WARNING

Chicken Run is looking very enjoyable, especially for younger gamers. The inclusion of clever sub-games, cut-scenes and movie footage might also be enough to engage the big kids for an hour or three as well.

UNLEASH THE BEAST WITHIN



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Available 24th November

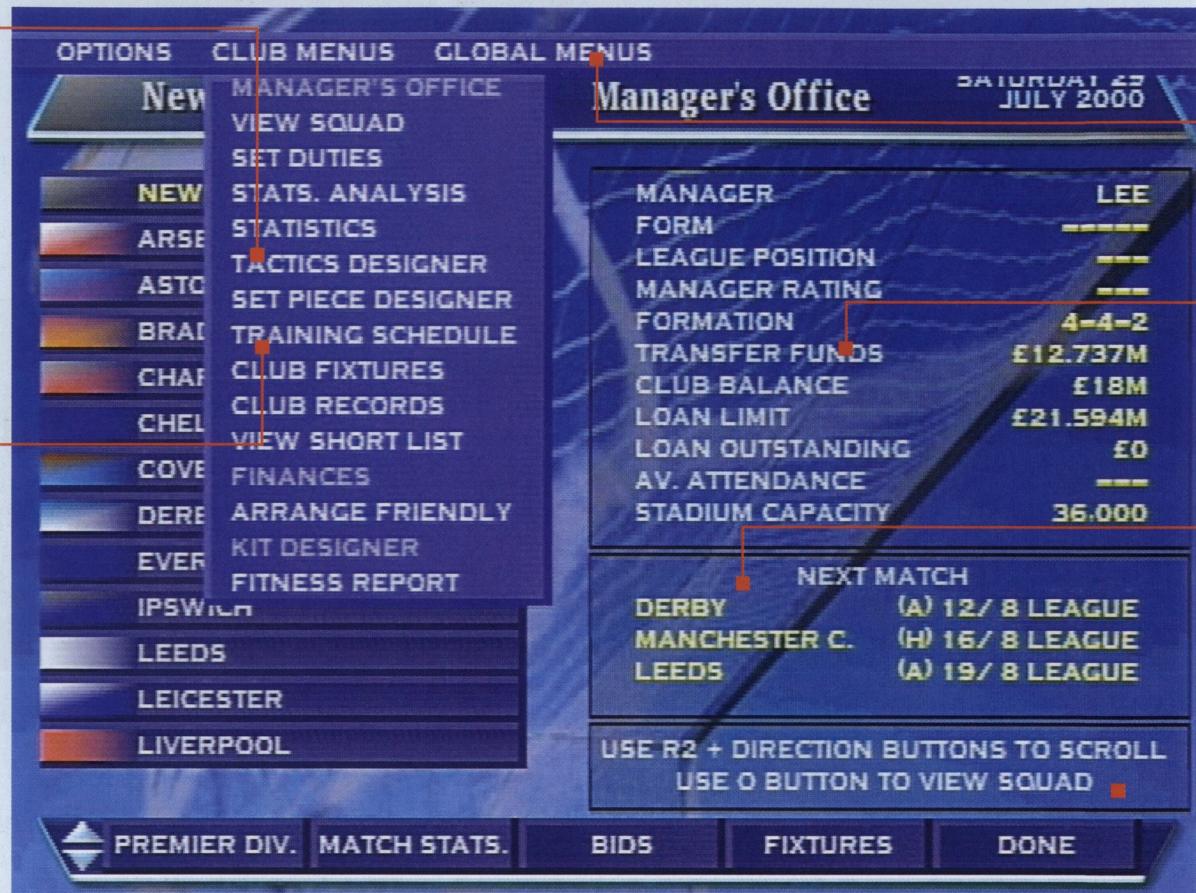
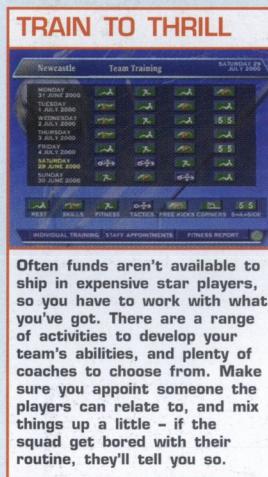
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Rage

Alex Ferguson's Player Manager 2001

FERGIE LEADS YET ANOTHER TITLE CHARGE, WITH THE SEQUEL TO ONE OF THE BEST FOOTBALL MANAGEMENT OFFERINGS AROUND



Flayer Manager 2001 does everything in its power to let you know how well your players, and as a manager, are performing. Like its predecessor (*OPM58* 9/10), it's not pretty and it has lots of menu screens, but once again Anco is shunning gloss in favour of depth.

Effective search engines, and a statistical breakdown of how your boys are doing, make you feel that you're touting for and governing the best talent in Europe. There's plenty to do, but in the game you don't feel that

you're missing anything – partly because the game doesn't just trundle on until you get the sack. If your board is displeased, they'll tell you. If your players are tired of the same training routine, they'll whinge.

You choose any team from the English and Scottish leagues and, since you have total control over training and selection, you're answerable to the chairman and fans of the club. You also choose tactics, and purchase and sell players within your budget. In *PM2001* you also have the chance to take part as an individual player –

the player in *Player Manager* – building your stats alongside the rest of the squad. Sadly, this option wasn't available in the version we played. What it did reveal, however, is the statistical preoccupation of this game; you really feel that you're charting the capabilities of your team.

The actual match engine looks somewhat racy at present, with iffy collision detection and slightly dubious AI – stare in wonder as your winger pegs it 20 yards toward his own goal for want of attacking options.

The code we saw provided only a snippet of a season, but

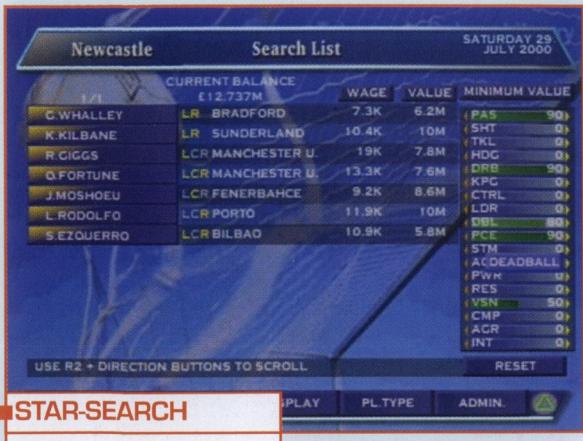
"The fact that you can edit set-pieces, as well as tactics, to the finest detail gives a strong sense of involvement"

it was enough to convey the sense of depth you'd expect from this series. The fact that you can edit set-pieces, as well as tactics, to the finest detail does give a strong sense of involvement, even if the presentation isn't immediately

appealing. Clearly Anco isn't focusing on breadth, and the game would certainly benefit from a wider range of active leagues. Any really major gripes? Those blasted loading times are back again. ■

Lee Hall

Alex Ferguson's Player Manager 2001



STAR-SEARCH

The search engine is very effective. You can choose from all the game's personnel, including European stars, using a series of statistical filters to find precisely the type of player you want.

FERGIE'S RATING

In the final game you'll be given a summary of your performance over the whole season by football's favourite knight himself.

ON THE PITCH



You can watch the game in statistical overview or as highlights, or you can sit through the whole darn thing. Make changes during the game to effect an improvement on the field. Or not.



POINTS

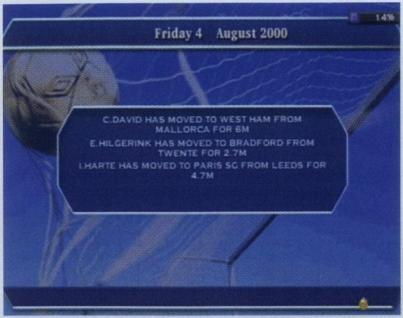
- Good search engine
- Lots of tactical input
- It's deep, man

MINUS POINTS

- Long loading times
- Only England and Scots
- Dodgy match engine

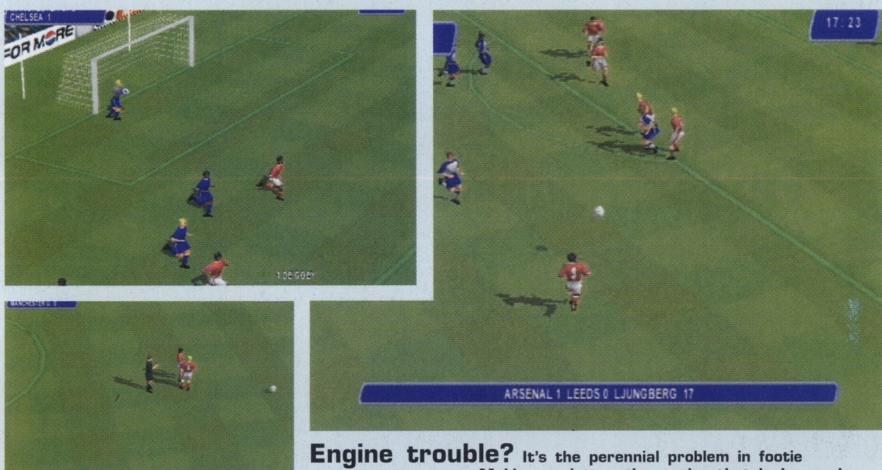
ADVANCE WARNING

Great game but... Yes, as always with *Player Manager* it's those loading times. Have a nap while other managers are 'busy with their daily tasks'. When you wake up, you can get into the nitty-gritty once more. Oh for a bit of multitasking...



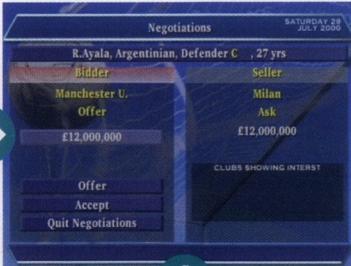
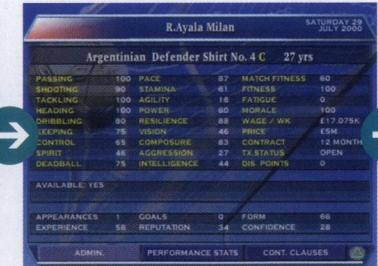
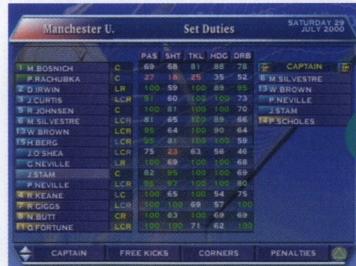
Transfer talk.

Throughout the game you will be constantly updated on the comings and goings in European football. Often players you won't have heard of make big-money moves to rival clubs

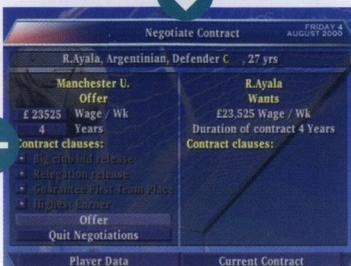


Engine trouble? It's the perennial problem in footie management games. Making an interactive engine that looks good

PLUGGING THE GAP IDENTIFY THE GAP IN YOUR SQUAD AND FILL IT

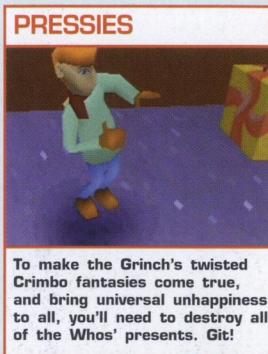


First you need to identify a weakness in your team. Take time to scan the squad's statistics and build up a picture of their relative abilities, examining opposition teams to expose your own 'failings'. In the case of Man Utd, you'll find yourself sadly lacking a defender of quality to play alongside Jaap Stam. Use the player search filter to identify a powerful player with good heading and tackling ability. It's best to look abroad as well as in the UK. Robert Ayala, for example, is also a good passer. Bid for him and then negotiate a contract before sitting back to enjoy watching him mop up at the back.



The Grinch

FINALLY, A GAME THAT LETS YOU BE TRULY NASTY TO PEOPLE AND SPOIL THEIR CHRISTMAS. HURRAH!



Ge's a green, furry monster who smells a bit, has bad breath, and a penchant for rotten eggs.

After a *News Of The World*-style smear campaign, he's ostracised by the good people of Whoville (the Whos, no less), exiled, and forced to live in a snowy cave several miles away, in perfect solitude. He has every right to be angry with the common man. And he is. That's the lot of The Grinch, you see. So, he plots and schemes, and comes up with a plan to get his own back on the people

of the town. This is where you take control.

Although initially *The Grinch* might look like a 3D platformer, it soon dashes any such illusions. There's a portion of platforming, but that's not the crux of the game. In fact, there's no single thing that you have to do; you'll be destroying Christmas presents to unlock sub-games, tip-toeing past sleeping policemen, and collecting blueprints so that you can create bizarre and, for the most part, whiffy inventions. Rotten-egg launchers, anyone?

The most striking thing about *The Grinch* is that you

have to be unremittingly spiteful. After all, you're the bad guy, so you do bad things. When you get into town for the first time, you'll find yourself squashing children's Christmas presents, and bouncing the little ones away with your fuzzy pot-belly when they try to hug you. Accompanied by a darkly festive soundtrack, it's a truly unusual and endearing experience.

Thus far, the game engine is looking pretty slick, and the cartoony, stylised graphics certainly lend the title a sense of atmosphere. The animations are great, too, both for the

"The most striking thing about the game is that you have to be unremittingly spiteful"

lumbering, fawning Grinch and his doggy companion, Max.

Press **square** at any time, and you'll be able to control Max instead of The Grinch. He's handy for reaching areas that The Grinch is too big to squeeze into, and also for distracting troublesome townspeople, such as snowball-throwing youths or freeze-gun-

wielding coppers. In short, *The Grinch* is shaping up to be an inventive and original game. It borrows elements from platform, puzzle, adventure and shoot 'em up games, and blends them in a wholly novel way. Rest assured, we'll be keeping an eye on the green grumbler. ■

Al Bickham



WINTER WONDERLAND

Welcome to downtown Whoville. There are around 15 different locations within the game, and you'll find yourself skipping between them in an attempt to collect all the blueprints you need.



FLY



This bizarre fly-thing (it's actually a giant eyeball with wings) will sting you repeatedly until you eject your evil green tummy-gas at it. Twisted? You betcha.

DARK LIFE



This is the Grinch's health meter. It's drained by all sorts of things, such as love from strangers and snowballs from mischievous youths.

OPINION

+ POINTS

- ♦ Inventive gameplay
- ♦ Nice characterisation
- ♦ Bizarre objectives

- POINTS

- ♦ Too easy for big 'uns
- ♦ Repetitive in places
- ♦ Length issues

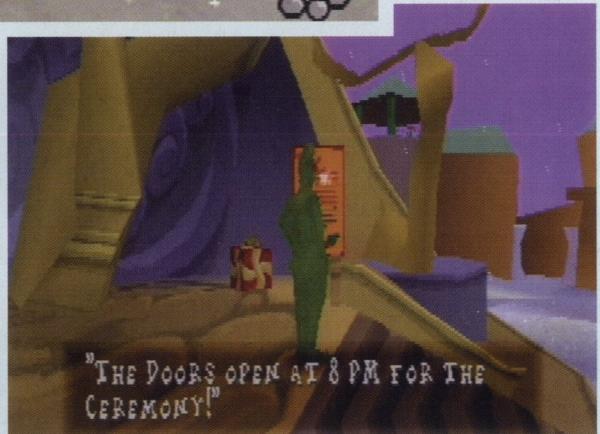
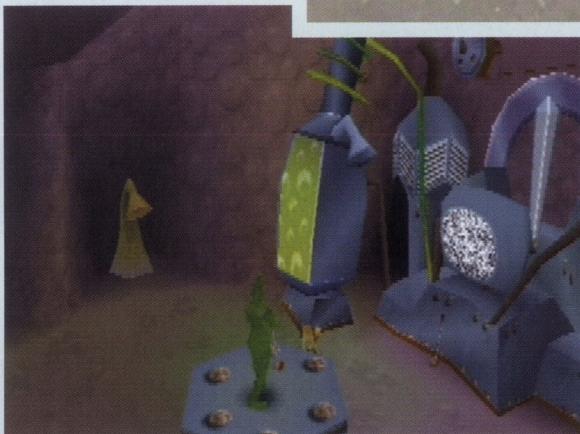
! ADVANCE WARNING

Should be a great laugh, and no doubt it'll be a hit with the kiddies, too, with its mix of cartoony visuals, naughty-but-nice humour and poetic voice-overs. A game for all ages, we hope. A full review will be coming your way soon.



Carrey movie.

The Grinch is based on a film in which Jim Carrey plays a *ker-azy* green trickster who speaks in animated tones and is very facially expressive. For a change



THE GRINCH FILES GREEN IS THE COLOUR OF ENVY



The Grinch. As furry green fellas go, he's an uncommonly embittered and vindictive individual. The truth is, his rejection by Who society is only half the story - the Grinch has actually designed a whole bunch of inventions to get his own back on the Whos, ruin their Christmas, and put the world (as he sees it) to rights. Unfortunately, all his gadget blueprints get blown away when he topples the boxes that contain them, so your initial tasks - alongside squishing the Whos' presents - are to recover the blueprints and build the gadgets back at your hideout. And you thought you'd never see an octopus wall-climber in action again.

ISS

**NO LONGER 2000 OR MILLENNIUM AND DEVOID OF BOTH
EVOLUTION AND PRO... IS THIS A CUT-BACK TOO FAR?**

RESTRICTED VIEW

The camera angles can be tweaked for your viewing pleasure but the default is still the close-up side-on view that's ideal for when you want to spread the play but tricky when you try to shoot.

CREATE-A-STAR

Not satisfied with your roster of kickers? Then make one up. Simply shift stat points around until you create the kind of player who'd be first on anyone's team sheet.

**SKILLS AND SPILLS**

The analogue stick enables you to perform fancy turns and your star players have special abilities like flashy step-overs, through-balls and overhead kicks. One-touch passing comes as standard.



Developed by the KCEO team responsible for the N64 *ISS*, this new effort contrasts greatly with *ISS Pro Evolution*.

Taking an entirely different approach to videogame football, KCEO have attempted to create a title as accessible as *FIFA*, but which produces passing moves worthy of Brazil's 1970 World Cup-winning side.

Cunning through-balls and cheeky chips are combined with slick passing to generate fluid attacks that end in frequent goal mouth incident. It's played

purely for arcade thrills and relies far more on attacking bravado than tactical acumen.

In another twist, the finished version will also be the first *ISS* to feature real team and player names, after Konami realised it couldn't compete with *FIFA* on gameplay alone.

In truth, this version is something of a stop-gap before the arrival of the *Pro Evolution 2* next year (see page 15). Sure, pinball football is fast and fun but it's hard to see it seriously competing with the sublime creativity of *Pro Evolution 2*. ■

Pete Wilton

Publisher: Konami

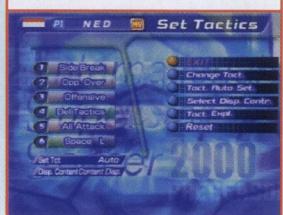
Developer: In-house

Number of players: One to four

Release date: Late November

THE LOOKS

Hardly the prettiest thing to look at, *ISS* nevertheless delivers a fairly fluid game of footie. The exception has to be when the players perform sharp turns or tackles - at the moment the animation seems to stand still.

KNOW HOW

Knowing where your players are and the opposition aren't is vital, but due to *ISS*'s side-on view you'll need to use the scanner to judge when the last man is going to charge out of the box.

"The finished version will be the first to feature real team and player names"

OPINION**+ POINTS**

- Familiar arcade style
- Super-tough goalies
- All the right names

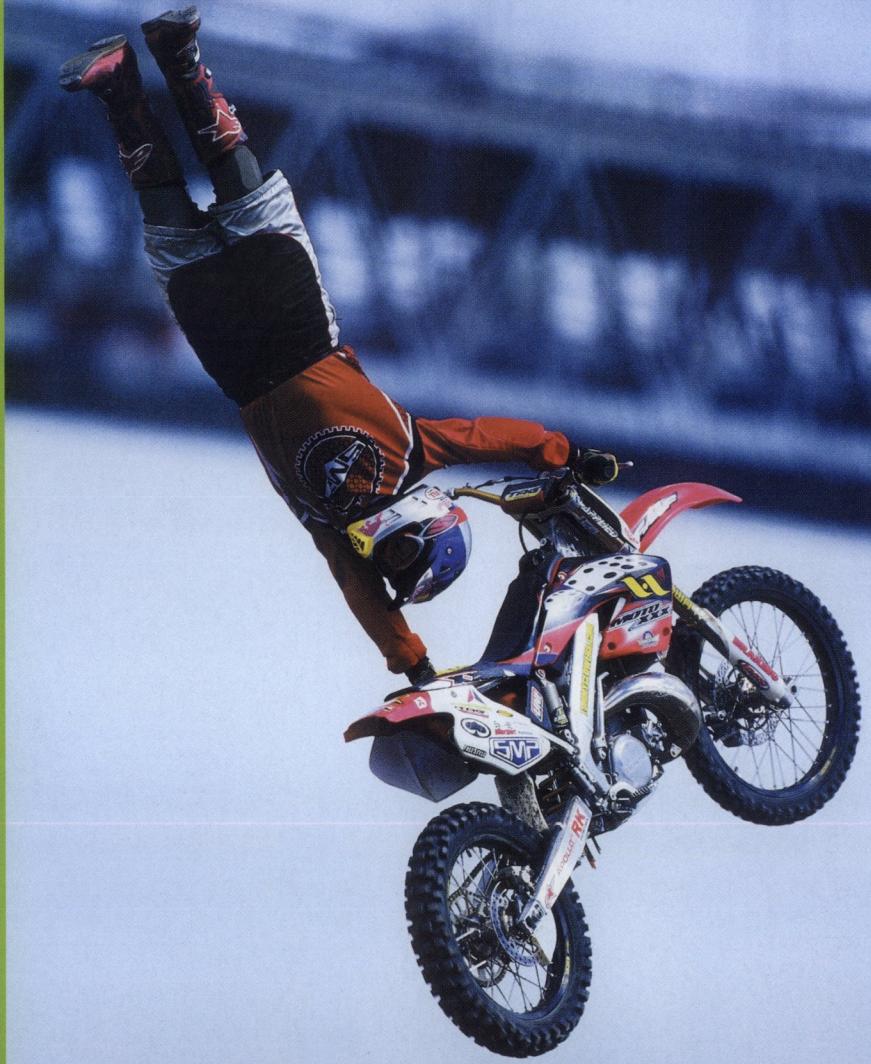
- POINTS

- Retro presentation
- Clunky feel
- Nothing new

! ADVANCE WARNING

We want to like *ISS*, but at the moment it feels like it's trying to play with two busted knees. The controller set-ups are awkward and the players don't respond fast enough. It needs improving if it's to live up to the high standards of other *ISS* titles.

HIGHER! FASTER! FURTHER!



BAD air day!



"The best bike game on PlayStation" 8/10

POWER

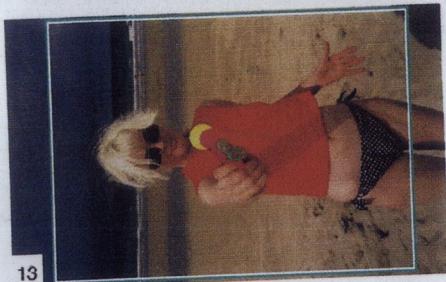
- Authentic RMD+ advanced real motocross dynamics.
- Dozens of authentic motocross, supercross, freestyle and amateur events including the THQ US Open.
- More than 16 awesome fully-customizable bikes from each manufacturer.
- Over 50 combo freestyle tricks and signature moves.
- Eight challenging modes with multi-player championship seasons, freestyle competitions and careers.

**Championship Motocross™
2001** featuring
Ricky Carmichael

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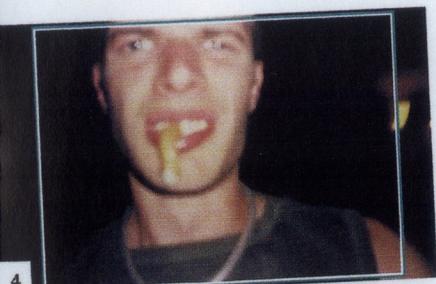




This, day-trippers, is the new PS one. Beautifully redesigned, it packs all your favourite ingredients in one powerfully cute little bundle. In the not too distant future you'll be plugging a mobile into it, downloading games and finding yourself glued to the portable screen. Once you discover it, you'll want to keep going back to it, unlike the hangovers, the phrase book, and the girl with the particularly large boyfriend.

INDEX PRINT

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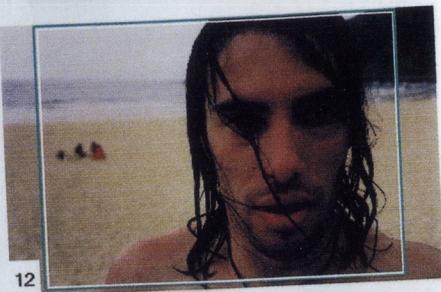
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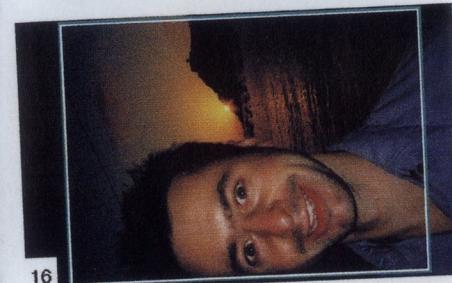
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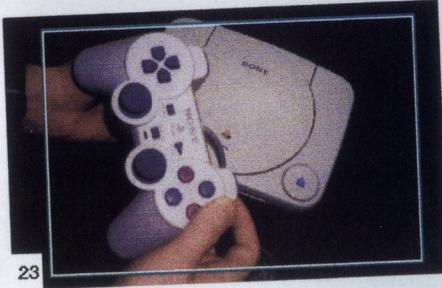
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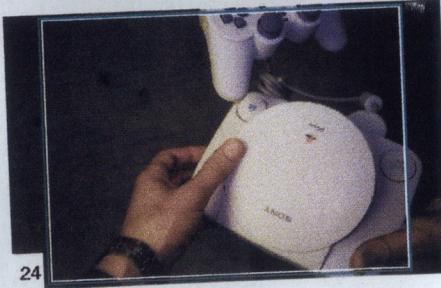
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FEATURE

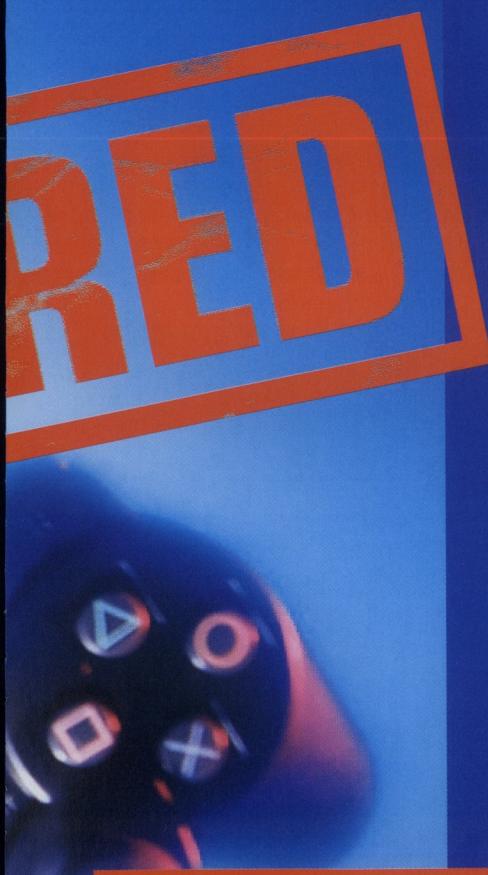


UNCOVER



Contents

ABSOLUTELY EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT PS2. THE ENTERTAINMENT REVOLUTION STARTS HERE



First there was fire, then the wheel, eventually electricity, and now PlayStation2. The world's most powerful console has landed and it will change all our lives forever. This is the platform that Sony refuses to call just a games machine. Its plan places PS2 at the centre of a home-entertainment revolution. The worlds of gaming, movies, music, digital technology and the Net are on a collision course, and PS2 is in position to harness the imminent entertainment explosion. But how and when? That's what we're going to find out over the next 22 pages. The games, the facts, the power, and the future... we're going to explore the whole black beast inside and out. Bring it on.

LAUNCH DATE: 24 NOVEMBER 2000

TERRITORY: UNITED KINGDOM (& EUROPE)

SUPPLY: 200,000 UNITS (500,000 EUROPE-WIDE)

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So what do you get for £299? We take a detailed look at PS2...

P64 OPENING TIME

... then expose the magical workings of its inner sanctum.

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More than a console, PS2 is the hub of your futuristic home-entertainment centre.

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The definitive verdict on the first wave of PS2 titles to hit UK shores, including *Tekken Tag Tournament*, *Ridge Racer V*, *Silent Scope*, *Smuggler's Run*, *Midnight Club*, and *ESPN International Track & Field*.

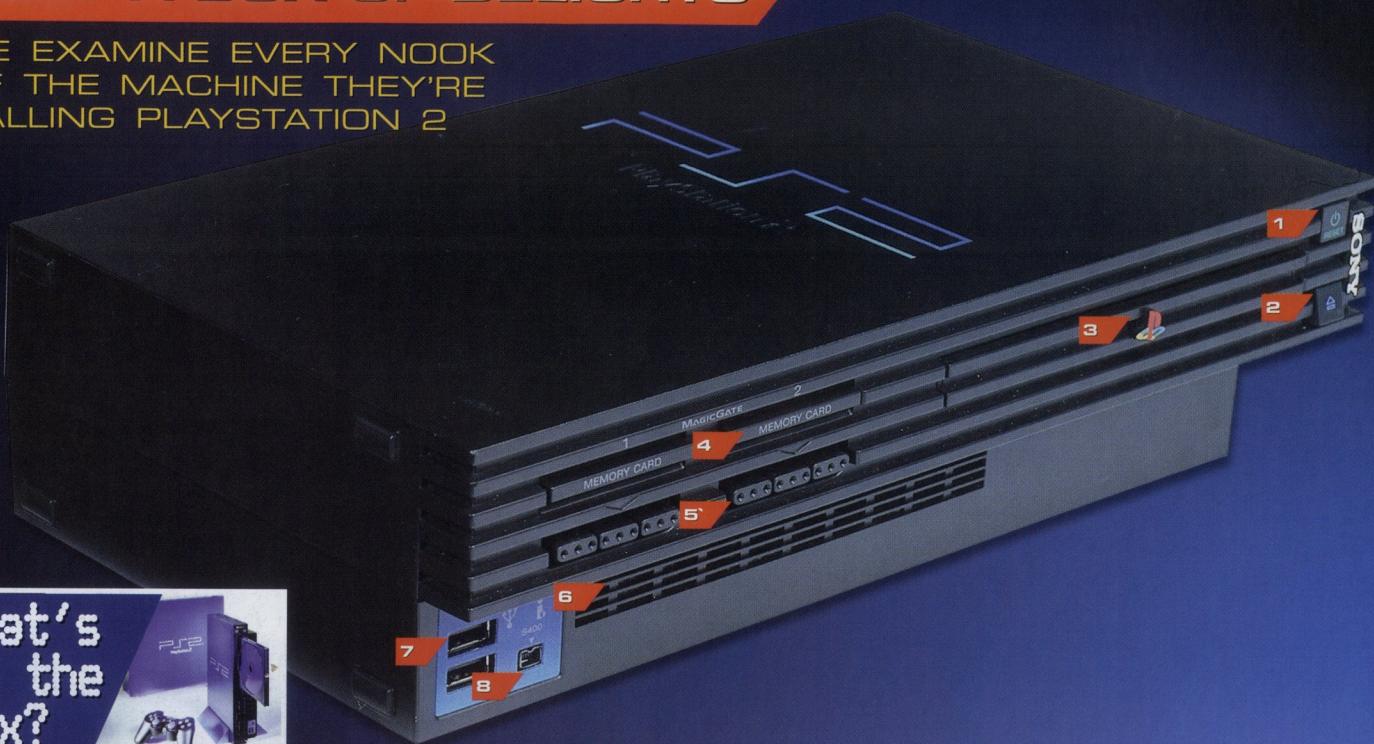
P80 PS2 NEWS

A first look at *Silent Hill 2*, plus *Commandos 2*, *Unreal Tournament* and *Gran Turismo 3*. Get in there.

FEATURE

PS2: A BOX OF DELIGHTS

WE EXAMINE EVERY NOOK OF THE MACHINE THEY'RE CALLING PLAYSTATION 2



For £299 you get:

- PlayStation 2 console
- Dual Shock II controller
- Demo disc
- Instructions
- Power lead
- SCART lead



1

RESET BUTTON

Wipes the RAM and reboots the machine, just like on PS1. The little green light flashes when PS2 is reading the disc, twinkling like a busy little glow-worm against your sleek black machine. It's red when you haven't placed a disc in the drawer, so bung one in.

2

OPEN BUTTON

To save you taking a pair of pliers to the disc tray, simply press this button and you'll be given a slot in which to place your game/DVD movie. The blue LED flashes when the drawer is opening and remains on when the machine is on.

3

DISC DRAWER

Handy this. Press the OPEN button and this slides out to accommodate a disc. Note the little PlayStation logo on the front, which can be swivelled according to whether your machine stands tall and proud or lies low and sleek. There's also a lip to prevent your disc tumbling out when you stand the machine vertically.

4

MEMORY CARD SLOT

As with PS1, these slots are protected with a little hinged door. However, they now boast a beautiful ridge, in keeping with the machine's chic lines. Note, you can't save PS2 games on a PS1 Memory Card, even though that Memory Card will work to upload and save PS1 data played on the new machine.

5

JOYPAD PORTS

Identical to those on PS1. Joypads, Multi Taps and other controller peripherals are all at home here. There are some backward-compatibility issues. For example, you can't use a PS1 Multi Tap in your PS2. Joypads will be no bother.

6

VENTILATION GRILL

Located under the bulk of your black beauty, this grill enables air to flow out of the machine in order to prevent over-heating. So no more skipping FMV, as experienced on older versions of PS1. That's evolution for you.

The Joypad

FINGERS OF FUN

ANALOGUE BUTTONS

The four action and shoulder buttons now offer a more subtle level of control because they can sense up to 256 levels of pressure when you press them (more electricity is discharged the harder you push, enabling PS2 to measure the intensity of your actions). This is brilliant

for driving games, for example, where you can feather the brake button to hold the racing line rather than relying on the clumsy old digital On/Off instruction that relied solely on timing not pressure. Few games harness the technology to date, and none operate to such a depth of sensitivity, though *Ridge Racer V* can read three levels of force.

SELECT, START AND ANALOGUE SWITCHES

As before, these are the basic controls on your pad. Switch on 'analog' to make your sticks active.



ANALOGUE STICKS

Just like on your original Dual Shock pad, these sticks give you greater precision in your movement and provide an alternative to the D-pad.

VIBRATION MOTOR

Buried in the heart of each arm are the vibration motors. They operate just like the Dual Shock I pads and deliver a shudder of delight when you go over chevrons or get punched, for example.

CASING

Identical to the original pad, except it's now a stealthy black colour in line with the main machine. Oh look, it says Dual Shock II on the front in PlayStation-blue. Ah...



7

USB PORTS

Enable you to plug and unplug live wires without risking electrocution. USB ports are also the industry-standard gateway to a world of peripherals. They will enable you to plug in all sorts of add-ons, such as a keyboard, mouse and even a waffle grill (maybe). The first USB-compatible peripherals are now available in Japan (see p.70).

8

I-LINK PORT

Another industry-standard port that enables PS2 to connect with data-transmitting hardware such as digital camcorders, laptops, and other bits of digital wizardry. Eventually these devices will be able to feed sounds, images and other data to PS2. Sadly, nothing exists to slip in here yet, but Sony has plans, big plans... (see p.70)

9

POWER SWITCH

It won't take you hours to work this one out – it's like a kettle switch. The binary symbols indicate whether the machine is on or off. If 1 is depressed, we have lift-off. If 0 is down, there's no power flow – so stop kicking it.

10

POWER CABLE PORT

Uses exactly the same power cable as your old PlayStation. Stick it in, but make sure it's not live, kids – you could die.

11

COOLING FAN

This will help to keep your baby cool, even when you are raising hell as you mash baddies in *Metal Gear Solid 2*. Air is sucked into the machine and drifts out of the ventilation grill at the front.

12

A/V OUT

PlayStation2 comes with a SCART unit that hooks up here and connects to your SCART-compatible television. You can also use your old RF unit, which slots in here too, and slips into your dusty old aerial socket.

13

DIGITAL OUT

Enables you to connect your PS2 to top-quality sound systems, such as Dolby Surround speaker sets. For the first time, you can enjoy your Sony games console with ear-popping, cinema-style audio.

14

EXPANSION PORT

To make the most of on-line broadband gaming, PS2 needs a hard-drive add-on that'll snuggle in here. Except the credit-card-sized slot is being redesigned for the UK PS2. We'll get a video-cassette-shaped flap that'll eliminate the need for an add-on adaptor. The hard drive is due for UK release mid-2001 (see p.68).

The Extras

PERIPHERAL VISION...

**LINK CABLE
TBA**

As yet there are no confirmed plans for an official link cable, never the most popular of peripherals on the original PlayStation. Eventually it will be possible to connect two PS2s with an i-link cable, although no software companies have announced any games that will support the technology.

**DVD REMOTE
TBA**

Several controllers will be available at launch, with a Thrustmaster model from hardware company Guillemot the first to be announced. Sony's official controller is on the way for early next year. You can also use your Dual Shock II pad for scene-skipping purposes.

**DEMO DISC
FREE**

PS2 will arrive with a gratis demo disc showcasing the console's capabilities. The playable games are as follows: *FIFA 2001*, *SSX*, and *Wild Wild Racing*. Highlights include an intro movie, a technical demo and rolling demos of *ISS*, *Dead Or Alive 2*, *Fantavision*, and *Ridge Racer V*.

**MEMORY CARD
£27.49**

An 8Mb storage facility that's essential for saving PS2 games. Eight times more powerful than the old card, it utilises Sony's new data encryption system, Magic Gate. This system is also used by Sony to store data on other gadgets, such as camcorders and digital Walkmans.

**G-CON
TBA**

There are no plans to produce an official lightgun designed specifically for PS2, as no lightgun games have been announced yet. Rumour has it that a UK developer is working on an as-yet-unnamed lightgun title that will be the first on PS2. More on that as we uncover the facts...

**GT3
STEERING
WHEEL
TBA**

Due out next February with the game. The main feature of the wheel is the True Force Feedback Steering. That means you'll experience a loosening of the wheel as you reach high speeds, and things will get tighter on bends.

**MULTI-TAP
£29.99**

The original PS1 Multi Tap does NOT work in PS2. You'll have to get your mitts on this more sturdy beast, which plugs into both the Controller and Memory Card slots. It enables you to slot four Controllers and four Memory Cards in for top multiplayer gaming pleasure.

**RF LEAD
£14.99**

The standard SCART lead that comes with your PS2 will work fine in new tellies, but some older TVs don't have the right connection. Fear not, you can use your old RF cable that connects to the aerial socket, or even buy a brand spanking new one. S-Video and composite leads work too.

**STAND
£9.99**

Isn't it amazing? PS2 can stand up tall and proud to slot neatly by your TV with the aid of a nifty stand (comes in horizontal and vertical flavours). You needn't buy one, as the console will remain upright of its own accord, though many strong wind or marauding toddlers will soon put paid to that.

FEATURE

OPENING TIME

EXPOSED: THE ENGINEERING THAT MAKES PLAYSTATION 2 THE WORLD'S MOST POWERFUL CONSOLE...

U nlike a PC, a car engine or even the Royal Mail, a console works perfectly. You pop a disc in and as if by magic a game appears.

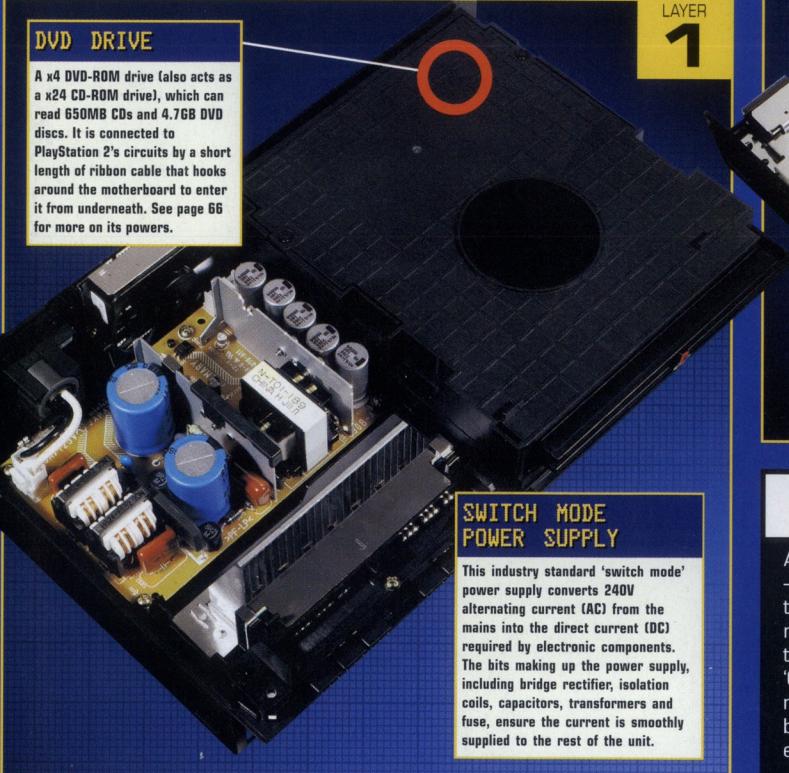
PlayStation 2 is even more fantastical – the sexy sliding DVD-drive should really appear through a cloud of dry ice.

Yet, like magic, it's more amazing when you know how it's done. The inner workings of PlayStation 2 were a labour of love from hundreds of engineers spending millions of pounds in research and development to give Sony the best games machine.

Imagine whizzing inside PlayStation 2 like an electrical pulse. Chips zap electrical signals to other chips at unimaginable speeds, with millions of calculations taking place every second to the beat of the machine's internal clock.

This isn't some fantasy world. By looking inside the machine itself, you can see how it all comes together. So with the help of Mike Nabarro, Sony's technical services manager, that's what we did.

The Mechanical deck



DVD DRIVE

A x4 DVD-ROM drive (also acts as a x24 CD-ROM drive), which can read 650MB CDs and 4.7GB DVD discs. It is connected to PlayStation 2's circuits by a short length of ribbon cable that hooks around the motherboard to enter it from underneath. See page 66 for more on its powers.

SWITCH MODE POWER SUPPLY

This industry standard 'switch mode' power supply converts 240V alternating current (AC) from the mains into the direct current (DC) required by electronic components. The bits making up the power supply, including bridge rectifier, isolation coils, capacitors, transformers and fuse, ensure the current is smoothly supplied to the rest of the unit.

LAYER 1



WARNING:

DON'T TRY THIS AT HOME!

Unless you happen to have an electronic engineering laboratory in your garage, you risk damaging your PlayStation 2 if try to take it apart. The smallest discharge of static electricity can ruin the delicate chips.

And that's where Sony's new warranty sticker system for PS2 (and PSOne) comes into play. Slapped over a crucial screw, the 'intelligent' sticker leaves a mark saying it's been tampered with if you try to tear it off. Removing it voids your warranty. It's part of Sony's effort to crack down on 'chipping' and pirate games.

The Heat Sink layer

LAYER 2



HEAT SINK

Electronic components can generate a surprising amount of heat, especially during 24-hour game sessions. The heat sink sucks heat out of the unit via its air fan, which blows hot air away from the machine. So you can keep it on all day and night and your console still won't melt!

Made in Japan

As we go to press, the PS2's we'll see in Europe are still to arrive – and they certainly aren't available for open-heart surgery. So we've taken apart a Japanese model. The big difference between the models will be a built-in hard disc bay in the European models. But there will be other changes too. The Japanese chips are built with '0.25 micron' technology – that is, to a scale of one quarter of a millionth of a metre. But for Europe and America, some chips will be made with the latest 0.18micron technology. That means everything can be packed into an even smaller space.

The Emotion Engine layer

LAYER
3

THE MOTHERBOARD

The green motherboard is covered with hundreds of tiny electrical devices, some of which even Mike struggles to name precisely. Capacitors, rectifiers and the like ensure that current is delivered smoothly to the components.

There is also more to the board itself than is immediately apparent. It's actually made from over a dozen layers, all consisting of pathways piping information about the system. Small dots on the surface denote elevator-like connections where one layer joins another.

THE SYSTEM BATTERY

"This battery keeps the real-time clock running when the system is switched off at power down," says Mike. "When I rebuild this machine, the clock will still show the correct date and time."

DIGITAL OPTICAL OUTPUT

"This enables fibre optic connectivity," says Mike. "This allows for digital connectivity to a mini disc, for example, or to a Dolby Digital 5.1 decoder which can then go into a full digital surround sound system."

If you want to record PlayStation 2 music on to MiniDisc (perhaps from some PS2 DJ software) or annoy your neighbours with Dolby Surround Sound *Tekken Tag*, this is the hole you'll plug into.

GRAPHICS SYNTHESISER (GS)

The main graphics processing unit, running at 147.456 MHz. It has 4MB of embedded VRAM, and processes polygons, and performs line tracing, anti-aliasing and all the other graphics functions. Basically, the Emotion Engine works out what a scene should look like – the GS then paints that picture on screen. 4MB of RAM means the chip does this much more quickly than if it had to get its data from the main system RAM.

Boffins will notice the GS runs at half the speed of the EE. All the chips' clock speeds are derived from the main central 'beat' of the EE, like a drummer banging a beat on a slave ship.

SYSTEM MEMORY

"These two circuits are the system RAM. They are each 16MB and they directly serve the Emotion Engine," says Mike.

The two chips provide PlayStation 2 with 32MB of main memory – the first PlayStation had 4Mb. The memory is mainly used for storing graphical information before it's required by the EE or GS, like actors waiting in the wings. It also stores the rules for game physics, for artificial intelligence and for gameplay – in short, everything the game needs to run, including the code itself.

INPUT OUTPUT PROCESSOR (IOP)

"This is the very clever chip that includes the complete functionality of PlayStation," says Mike. "It handles all the main interface functions. Data from the USB ports, the i-Link, the memory cards and controller ports all comes in here."

The IOP takes these inputs – pressing \otimes on the joystick, for instance – and processes them, then feeds them, via the system bus, to the EE, GS and other chips.

And it's stunning to think that the entire PS1 now basically fits into this one chip in PlayStation 2.



EMOTION ENGINE (EE)

"This is the heart of the machine, the main central processor," says Mike. "It's a 128bit 300MHz processor, developed bespoke and manufactured by Sony Computer Entertainment."

It actually runs at 294 point something MHz, but who's counting? EE is almost ten times faster than the PlayStation's CPU, but that's only half the story – it's what your chip does at that speed that really counts. With over 13 million transistors inside it, Emotion Engine is responsible for decoding the data contained on PS2 games and then telling the rest of the circuitry what to do with it.

With its twin Vector Units performing calculations and the Graphics Synthesiser doing all the graphical leg work such as shading polygons, the Emotion Engine gets far more done in a second than would a supposedly faster PC chip operating. In fact, Emotion Engine is technically so powerful, they had to change the rules on super computers to allow PlayStation 2 to be exported.

SIGNAL PROCESSING UNIT (SPU2)

"The sound processor chip has two cores – Core 0 and Core 1 – which are necessary to produce stereo functionality, each of 24 voices, operating at a frequency of 36.864MHz giving an overall sound resonance output from 0 to 48Khz," explains Mike.

This is the big noise behind the sound effects and sampled speech on PlayStation 2. It is supported by its own dedicated 2MB sound RAM chip, which means plenty of storage space for samples, musical waveforms and the like.

FEATURE

ALL THINGS TO ALL LIVING ROOMS

WHEN IT SAT DOWN TO DESIGN A SEQUEL, SONY CLEARLY HAD IDEAS ABOVE ITS PLAYSTATION, AND THE RESULT IS A SEQUEL THAT INCLUDES A DVD PLAYER, PC-LIKE CONNECTIVITY AND AN APPETITE FOR TOMORROW...

This is a console that will boast some of the very best videogames you'll have ever seen. Let's be clear about that – it's not a CD player with a graphics chip bolted onto the side.

But it's a console that plays DVDs too. Many people haven't even watched a DVD yet, but within a few months millions will have them in their living room.

It's also a console that will soon connect to everything from digital video cameras and printers while exchanging data with personal organisers and mini-disc players. In the future, you'll be able to connect

the whole caboodle to digital online networks, and pipe movies straight into your home.

Right now, PS2 is a games machine but that's only stage one of Sony's masterplan. It's also a slice of future-proof technology intended to evolve into a state-of-the-art home entertainment system without compromise. Over the next few pages we'll show you the shape of things to come, but what do you need to exploit the power of PS2 here and now? Here's *OPM*'s money-no-object guide to rearranging your living room.

61 INCH REAR PROJECTION TV

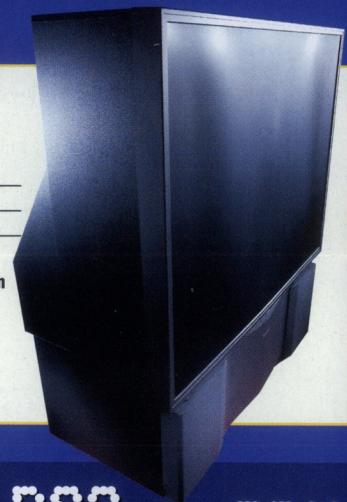
NAME: Toshiba 61PJ98B

PRICE: £3,500

COMPANY: Toshiba

CONTACT: 01276 72222

You want big games. You want big sounds. Then you'll need a big TV. The Toshiba 61-inch is the Godzilla of tellys, offering over five feet of picture. It even boasts a built-in Dolby Digital amp if you're feeling a bit strapped after that giant-sized price tag.



THE ULTIMATE



DVD on PS2 – any good?

We asked Steve Jarrett, regular contributor to *What DVD?* and *T3* magazine, if the PS2's DVD player was up to scratch

Among PS2's many appealing features is its playback of pre-recorded DVD videos. In fact, the sales of figures of hardware to software in Japan suggest that many PS2 owners are using it primarily as an affordable DVD player.

I've seen it in the flesh and, despite rumours to the contrary, can report that DVD playback is absolutely fine. Truth is, I've seen dozens of DVDs players, from £700 top-of-the-range systems to £150 budget models, and there is hardly any major

discernible difference in picture quality across any of them. Likewise, I've compared a Japanese PS2 to my own £600 Pioneer and I'm damned if I could tell them apart. Given that PS2 will generally be linked up to a bog-standard TV, rather than a dedicated home cinema set-up, the answer to 'Is it up scratch?' is a rather emphatic 'Yes'.

Of course, with dedicated DVD players, you get a host of luxury features that improve their ease-of-use. Playing a disc via the PS2 joypad is

just about bearable, but film buffs who want access to menus and special features will want to get a remote control, due next year.

Fortunately, the UK machine has the MPEG-2 software needed to run the DVD player stored on Flash RAM inside the machine, rather than on a Memory Card like the Japanese version. Sony also reckons it will be able to update this software in the future by making new drivers available on upgrade discs.

DVD FACT ATTACK

- DVD stands for Digital Versatile Disc
- The picture resolution is twice that of VHS video
- The sound quality is twice that of a CD
- The storage capacity is 7.5 times that of a CD
- DVDs do not suffer picture deterioration with repeated play
- DVD players will also play CDs and video-CDs

GAMING SET-UP



UNIVERSAL CONTROL

NAME: Pronto

PRICE: £200

COMPANY: Philips

CONTACT: 0500 787828

The only trouble with all this kit is that you'll soon find yourself scrabbling around for the right remote control - a complete pain in the arse when all you want is a quick round of *Tekken Tag*. Never mind, you can teach your Pronto the controls for all your gear and set up macros to assign each piece to the best settings at the press of one button.



TIVO TV RECORDER

NAME: TiVo

PRICE: £400

COMPANY: Thomson

CONTACT: 01732 520920



You've just got to the final levels of *Metal Gear Solid 2* and have been playing it now for two weeks non-stop. Trouble is, when it's all over, you realise that you've missed a season of Catherine Zeta Jones movies on the telly. Well, it's not a problem because your TiVo recorder has been actively seeking out your favourite programmes and storing them on its hard disk.

AV AMPLIFIER

NAME: VSX-908 RDS

PRICE: £1,000

COMPANY: PIONEER

CONTACT: 01753 789 789



While the built-in amp in the 61-inch telly is OK, if you really want to blast your neighbours out of their underpants you need some serious power behind your sounds. This is the cream of AV amps, specially crafted to make your music majestic and your movie action awesome. It's future-proof too, coping with George Lucas' new Lucasfilm THX ultra format as heard in *Episode One*.

Sounds Great

Dolby logo on PS2 - what's that about?

Most discs use a sound-format called Dolby Digital 5.1. This splits the sound into five channels to create the same surround experience as you get at the flicks. To hear this you'll need an AV Amplifier that splits the signal and provides the power for the six surround speakers. PS2 also supports an upgraded version called DTS (Digital Theatre Sound). Few DVDs and no games support DTS. But they will.

HOME CINEMA SPEAKERS

NAME: 800 HOME CINEMA SPEAKERS

PRICE: £5,650

COMPANY: B&W

CONTACT: 01903 750750

There's no way around this. If you want proper surround sound you'll need to fill your gaff with a whole host of air-pushers. You'll need a centre speaker for dialogue, plus two at the front and a pair at the rear for those surround effects. Finally, a sub-woofer rumbles away to shake you in your boots. And if you want the best then you've got to pay for it and the Nautilus are the best.



Jargon Busting

Whether you're a novice to gaming or an old hand blistered with PlayStation thumb, PS2 can be a confusing world...

3D GRAPHICS

On-screen imagery, usually based on geometrical shapes, designed with 'depth' and manoeuvred on screen by a game to give the impression of a true, perspective-based world, despite the flat screen.

ANTI-ALIASING

The smoothing of lines or curves to remove jagged edges by blending several colours together. Because of the finite number of pixels on a screen, a diagonal line must be made up of several smaller lines, which can give a noticeable stepped effect.

BUS

A connection in an electronic circuit used to carry data between chips, RAM, input and output ports and so on. The system bus is the PS2 equivalent of a high street.

BYTES (KB, MB & GB)

All data is stored in a computer as a bit. A bit is a binary instruction which can either be on or off. A byte is a collection of eight bits. Console memory, and hence how many instructions it can handle at once, is measured in bytes. A Kilobyte is 1024 bytes, a Megabyte is 1024Kb and a Gigabyte is 1024Mb. The PS1 has 2Mb RAM, the PS2 32Mb and the upcoming PS2 hard drive will probably have an elephantine 20Gigabytes.

FILTERING

Smoothes out the application of textures onto 3D objects to avoid them appearing overly blocky or blurry, especially in close-up.

FEATURE

THE FUTURE: BROADLY SPEAKING

MULTIPLAYER GAMING ENOUGH FOR YA? NOT FOR SONY. IT WANTS TO GIVE YOU THE WORLD ON A STICK. EVENTUALLY

THE SERVER



Wading into a horde of human opponents in some virtual online arena lacerated with rocket-fire is the ultimate gaming experience. Watching the screen freeze up and the action judder along like a demented slide-show is not. Speed is everything, and the fact is modems can't squeeze data down your telephone wire fast enough to cope with cutting-edge gaming. The top PC players eliminate these problems using ISDN digital connections. That's why Sony executives have rejected analogue modems and the Net as PS2's standard link to the outside world. Instead they describe PS2 as a broadband device and have a vision of the future that reaches far beyond multi-player gaming.

PS2 is designed to be hooked up to the big fat network connections now being supplied by cable TV companies and new telephone services, such as BT's OpenWorld ADSL service. Such networks let you download information several dozens of times faster

than an ordinary modem. In fact, it's possible to download entire movies as you watch them.

Think about it. You'll have your PlayStation 2 under your telly, and you'll already have grown used to watching movies through it, thanks to the DVD player. Is it such a leap to think that at some point in the future you might prefer to order those movies – or shop, or listen to Japanese radio or hear American sports broadcasts or whatever – through PlayStation 2? Sony doesn't think so.

In essence, Sony wants to sell movies, music, games, shopping, banking, and even things like e-mail, across its own broadband network. This vision is still at least a year away. Sony has told the financial markets it intends to become a network company – more like a provider of cable TV than TV maker, but much more than either of them. It's bought up or made investments in a host of Net-related media, technical and financial companies in Japan and America. It's also launched sonystyle.com,

an online shopping and lifestyle portal. And it already has movie and music divisions providing a ready-made content reservoir. It doesn't take a genius to see there's more to this than games.

But where does that leave us? A little more enlightened but still confused. Will we be able to play games head-to-head for example? In the short term, the answer is unclear. Standard modems will certainly go on sale (we've already seen a PS2 browsing the Net at the Tokyo Games Show), and games developers can already get the software required to write games for them, but none have said they're doing so. The other snag is that very few homes in Britain actually have a broadband connection right now, although Sony is banking on a massive take-up via cable and satellite TV within the next five years.

No doubt about it, that's a long time to wait, but Sony's plans are nothing if not ambitious, and some things are worth waiting for. ■

A Hard Drive to the Broadband Network

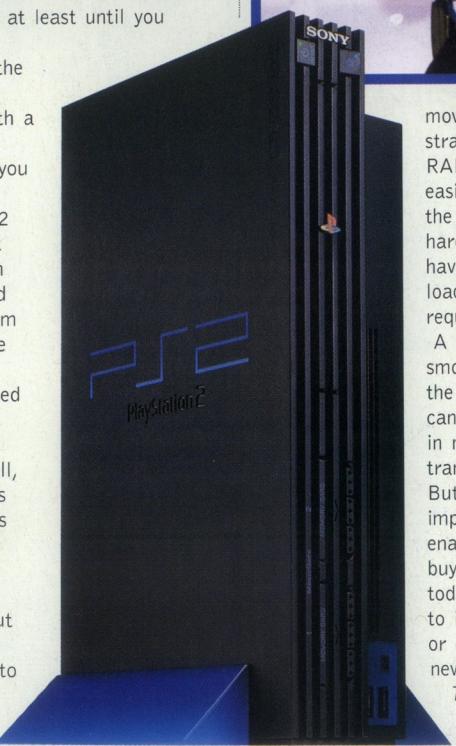
To make PS2 into a true broadband terminal, you'll need to take the hard sell - and shell out for the hard disk

Die-hard console gamers might never have encountered a hard disk before, but PC users will be familiar with the technology, even unwittingly. A hard disk is a non-removable disk drive that can store masses of data. PC hard disks routinely hold over 20Gb – enough to store five DVD discs.

But PlayStation 2 has a DVD drive already, so why the need for a hard disk? Well, the hard disk has the key advantage of being a rewriteable medium, which means that you can save information on to it, erase it and overwrite it. It's like a cross between the RAM that the console loads a game into from the DVD, and the DVD that can store information permanently. It's slower than RAM but faster than DVD; it's rewriteable like RAM but, like a DVD, it can store the information indefinitely – at least until you delete it.

Tellingly, the hard disk is combined with a broadband adaptor (so you can jack PlayStation 2 into a socket connection in the wall) and you need them both to make the most of Sony's planned broadband network.

Why? Well, one reason is that it makes Sony's job a lot easier. It would be possible – but difficult – to enable PS2 to download



movies and music straight into RAM. But it's far easier to store the data on to a hard disk, then have the PS2 load it when required. A hard disk smoothes out all the glitches that can happen in network transmissions. But, most importantly, it enables you to buy an album today and listen to it tomorrow, or download a new episode of *Tomb Raider*

and play it for a week. The hard disk will give PS2 flexibility that has never been seen in a console.

The hard disk is also vital in Sony's vision of making PS2 more than a games machine. You don't want to edit pictures from your digital camera only to lose all your work when your PS2 is inevitably switched off. So you'll save them on your hard disk.

Unlike our Japanese cousins-in-gaming, who will plug an external hard disk into their PS2s, we will be able to slot hard disks directly into the European model via a specially created hard disk docking bay at the rear of the machine.

What's not clear yet is exactly how much data the hard disk will be able to store. And there's no confirmation yet of a release date (probably next year) or a price. We can only hold our breath. ■



Jargon Busting

FRAME RATE

The number of times a game screen is updated per second is a common measure of graphical smoothness, and is termed 'frame rate'. A screen updated 50 times per second will appear smooth to the human eye. Complicated scenes can be difficult to calculate and slow the console down, leading to a jerky effect.

MIP-MAPPING

Using different versions of the same texture for different polygons, depending on their viewing distance in the scene. High-grade textures are used to improve the appearance of foreground objects, while background detail is reduced to keep up game speed.

PIXEL

A computer or games console image is made up of a grid of pixels. Specific pixels are then coloured in to create the desired graphic on-screen. A typical screen resolution would be 640x480 pixels. Higher resolutions mean more pixels – and thus better graphical appearance – but they're costly to process and can slow games down.

POLYGON

A flat shape made with at least three sides. Polygons are pieced together by game artists to make 3D shapes.

PORT

A connection point that can receive data from input devices such as joypads or modems, or can export data to printers or TVs.

PROCESSOR

A kind of silicon chip that performs calculations on data to create new data. The Emotion Engine is PS2's main processor, and is designed to shunt information from the game to PS2's specialist components and back again. The Graphics Synthesiser, in contrast, is a specialised processor optimised for graphics.

FEATURE

PLUG IN POWER

Never mind the Emotion Engine, the PlayStation 2 itself is a creative power-house thanks to its USB and i-Link ports...

If plugging a lightgun into PlayStation got you going, you'll love PlayStation 2. Aside from its two game ports (which will be graced by the usual array of weird and wonderful controller peripherals), Sony has built in other mysterious connectors – two USB ports and an i-Link port.

These ports are standard in the PC industry and as a result, there are already plenty of gadgets on the market. USB is slower than i-Link but it's perfect for keyboards and mice and even scanners and printers. Meanwhile, i-Link is also known as Firewire, which better describes its speedy power. At 400Mbps it has more than 30 times the bandwidth of USB, so it can handle digital video input from camcorders.

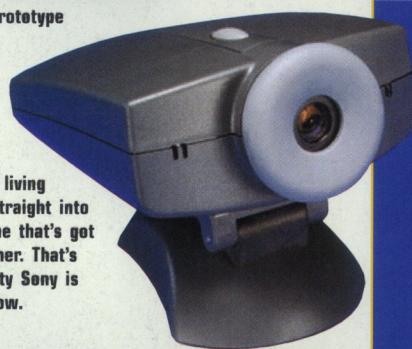
Another advantage of both USB and i-Link is the ability to daisy-chain several devices together, so you could add more than just three devices to your machine, despite the port limitations.

The catch is that none of these gadgets work with PS2 straight out of the box. Publishers – or Sony – will have to release software that makes use of them. It's no use plugging a digital camera into the i-Link port if you've just got *GT2000* loaded, nor will *Timesplitters* think much of a digital printer. Sony has already announced the first PS2-compatible devices (see below), but software companies must really rise to the challenge to exploit them.

Once they do, your PS2 will sit at the centre of a web of killer apps with the power to transform the face of gaming forever. Let's go there.

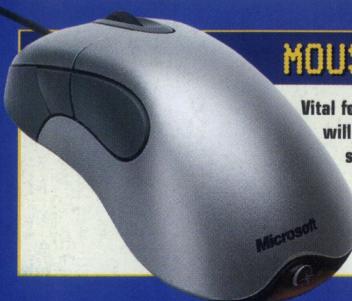
WEBCAM (I-LINK)

We've already seen prototype versions capable of tracking a gamer's movements and translating them into a game (See page six). Now imagine it taking a snap of your living room and porting it straight into that *Silent Hill 2* scene that's got you hollering for mother. That's the kind of interactivity Sony is experimenting with now.



MOUSE (USB)

Vital for rocket-jockeys and strategy gamers, it will also be invaluable if you're looking to do something creative with your PS2 such as edit graphics or mix music.



WIRELESS LINK CABLE (I-LINK)

Apple's oddly-named Airport is a short-range radio station that transmits from the Firewire port to the phone socket, providing Internet access without leads. It could easily be adapted for PS2's i-Link slot and could support a wireless network between several consoles for link-up play.



DIGITAL VIDEO CAMERA (I-LINK)

Recording your holidays, mates or movies on a digital camera is all very well, but the story needn't end there. Digital movies are easily edited, and with the right software, you could be cutting the next *Blair Witch* project on your PS2.



DIGITAL STILL CAMERA (USB/I-LINK)

At last the camera lies. Digital snaps are simple to manipulate and, eventually, you'll be able to use your PS2 to drop them into games. Imagine blowing apart countless *Resident Evil*-zombies that look suspiciously like your boss. Sony's PS2-compatible Cyber-shot DCS-P1 is due to hit Japan about now and can also print images and save 20-second movie clips.



DIGITAL PRINTER (USB/I-LINK)

Turning your PS2 into anything from a home office to the nerve centre of an eco-terrorist poster workshop, Sony's colour printer is due out in Japan this month, with software to boot. Doctored pictures of your mates, anyone?

ANALOGUE MODEM (USB)

Sony don't like modems so this will be left to the likes of Suncom who've announced the Online Station - a standard speed 56Kbps modem. It won't bring us broadband but it will enable head-to-head games, simple Web browsing and emailing.

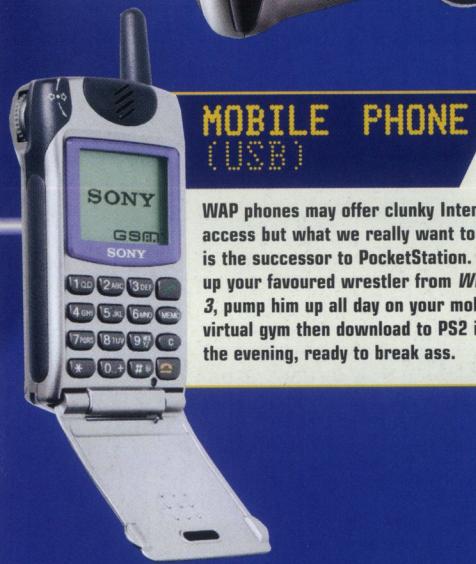
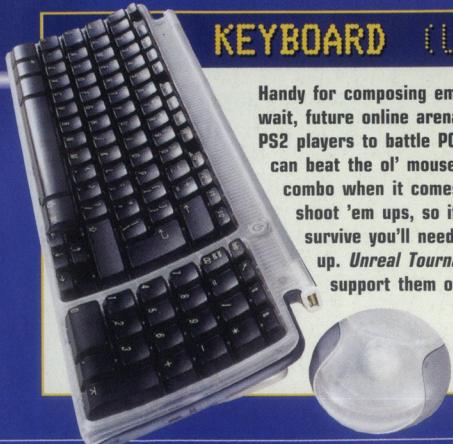


MICROPHONE (USB)

Microphones combined with speech recognition software could really give us something to shout about. Taito has announced the fantastic-sounding football sim, *The Greatest Striker*, in which you play a touchline manager, bawling at your players to pass, shoot or "move over for my old blind granddad who could do better than that". You know what we mean.

KEYBOARD (USB)

Handy for composing emails, sure. But wait, future online arenas will allow PS2 players to battle PC nerds. Nothing can beat the ol' mouse and keyboard combo when it comes to first-person shoot 'em ups, so if you're going to survive you'll need to get tooled up. *Unreal Tournament* will support them on PS2.



MOBILE PHONE (USB)

WAP phones may offer clunky Internet access but what we really want to see is the successor to PocketStation. Load up your favoured wrestler from *WWF 3*, pump him up all day on your mobile's virtual gym then download to PS2 in the evening, ready to break ass.

MINI-DISC PLAYER (DIGITAL OPTICAL OUTPUT)

Take Codemasters recently announced *Music 3 DJ* software, mix up a few tunes and then record them direct to MiniDisc via the digital optical output. Or upload new samples direct to PS2 from digital Walkman's. The choice, as Graham so rightly says, is yours.



Jargon Busting

RAM

Random Access Memory (RAM) is the short-term memory of a computer. The DVD places chunks of game here which are then accessed by the Emotion Engine and other chips via the system bus. The data in RAM can be updated, enabling the CPU to draw upon fresh instructions that let it change the picture on the TV, the in-game score and positions of characters etc.

SHADING

In three-dimensional graphics, this technique involves applying progressively lighter or darker shades of the same colour to a 3D object to give the impression of light falling on the object.

SURROUND SOUND

An audio technique that immerses the listener into a 3D 'soundscape' where sounds come from all directions, depending on the location of the object emitting them. For example, you might hear a car screeching up the left-hand side of your car in a driving game, while a police siren wails on the right. PlayStation 2 supports Dolby surround sound in the DVD player and can output it to your hi-fi.

TEXTURE

A flat, patterned map of pixel colours applied to the polygons of a 3D model to represent realistic surface details like cracks and smudges. These texture maps can be wrapped around objects to give the appearance of anything from a rough wall to a face. Lighting, shading and filtering completes the illusion.

VECTOR UNITS

These are two logical units (sort of mini-processors) within the Emotion Engine chip that provide the main processing horsepower. Reputedly hard to program.

FEATURE

SMOOTHER AND FASTER

FACT: PLAYSTATION 1 GAMES PLAY BETTER ON PS2

It's no fantasy, not only will the PS2 play virtually all of your old PS1 games but, in many instances, it can actually make them look better and load faster. It may sound impossible but the new machine's PlayStation Driver, the piece of software that lets it process PS1 code, can also be set up to do a couple of clever things using the extra power of PS2:



FASTER DISC ACCESS

Apart from playing DVD discs, the PS2 disc drive also works as a x24 standard speed CD player – that's twice as fast as the PlayStation's CD drive. A few games don't work with this 'fast' setting switched on but as for the rest loading times are often cut dramatically. In *Tencha 2*, for instance, the lantern symbols that show loading progress don't just light up one after another but often three at a

time! Loading between many segments is cut by as much as 70%, often taking just four or five instead of thirty or more seconds for the information to be read and a new level/movie to appear on-screen. But as if to prove that it can't heal the sick, we found the new driver can't turn the annoying 'opening doors' sequences from *Resident Evil 3* into an eye-blink (though they do open faster).



SMOOTHER TEXTURES

A common problem in many 3D games is that highly detailed polygon surfaces can appear to 'crawl' or 'go grainy'. To stop this from happening PS2 uses a technique called MIP Mapping. The idea is to use low-res (less detailed) versions of the texture on far away parts of a surface and a higher resolution version of the same texture close-up. The result is that surfaces will appear more solid as the PS2 effectively 'blurs' masses of polygons just as your eyes tend to do with surfaces in the real world – the only detail you lose is the graininess you don't want!

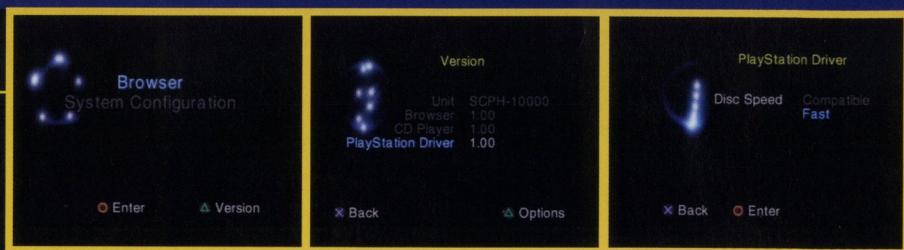
Before & After



We tested out the effectiveness of PS2 texture-smoothing on *Tencha 2* (left). The most obvious difference is that the pillar in the foreground is much less blocky looking. The wooden flooring has also been improved. Previously jagged black lines of colour are blurred and 'smoothed out'. Finally, look at the light-coloured wall. Not only are the individual squares of colour less prominent but the dark wooden slats now appear to have been straightened – miraculous!

How to do it

The texture smoothing and the fast CD-read are accessed through the PlayStation Driver options menu. You get to this by pressing **Ⓐ** when the glowing Browser appears (when you fire-up your PS2 without a disc inserted). Change the Texture Mapping option from Compatible to Smooth and the Disc Speed from Compatible to Fast. If you do have problems with these settings you can always change them back to Compatible for standard PS1 performance.



PS2 FAQ

THE QUESTIONS WE GET ASKED
ABOUT PS2. A LOT.

Q CAN I STILL GET ONE OF THE FIRST-WAVE OF PS2S?

A No, not without offering silly money or resorting to violence.

Q WILL THE PS2 COME WITH A DEMO DISC?

A Yes. And here's a full list of the contents*

PLAYABLE:

FIFA 2001
SSX Snowboard Supercross
Wild Wild Racing

Sports
Sports
Racing

VIDEO/ROLLING:

Dead or Alive 2
Fantavision
ISS
Ridge Racer V

Fighting
Puzzle
Sport
Racing

EXTRAS:

YABASIC (see below)
Find My Own Way

Utility
Technical

ATTRACT MODE

Intro video
Credits movie

YABASIC BASIC

The inclusion of YABASIC on the demo disc has taken many industry insiders by surprise. Basically (sorry), YABASIC is a version of the programming language BASIC that budding game developers first got to grips with on the ZX Spectrum. Once you get the hang of it, it should enable you to program your own games on PS2. YABASIC is effectively a replacement for the ill-fated Net Yaroze project that entailed buying a special black PlayStation and having a working knowledge of C+. This time the software's available for everyone, with an online manual that can be accessed via the Net and the ability to key code in using the PS2 keyboard. The idea is that this will result in an explosion of new development talent. And yes, that could be you...

*Contents subject to change due to slippage, cock-ups and *Acts Of God*



Q CAN I PLAY PS1 GAMES ON PS2?

A Almost all of them, yes.

Q CAN I PLAY PS2 GAMES ON PS1?

A No.

Q CAN I SAVE PS2 GAMES TO A PS1 MEMORY CARD?

A No

Q CAN I USE A PS1 MEMORY CARD IN PS2?

A Yes, but only for PS1 games

Q ARE MULTI TAPS COMPATIBLE EITHER WAY?

A No

Q WHAT ABOUT ALL OTHER PERIPHERALS?

A Joypads and other official controllers will be compatible either way.

Q HOW MUCH WILL GAMES COST?

A That's mostly down to the retailers. The best titles could come with a £44.99 tag, though it's likely the majority of games will be priced between £30 and £39.99

Q WILL THERE BE A RANGE OF PLATINUM PS2 TITLES?

A Sony isn't ruling that out yet. If it does happen on PS2 it won't be for 18 months to two years.

Q WILL I NEED ANY NEW LEADS TO PLUG INTO MY TELLY?

A You'll get a SCART lead with your new PS2, though you can use your old RF unit or purchase a new one if your TV is not SCART compatible.



But I can't get one...

We rang every major high-street chain in search of PS2s but the initial stock of 200,000 have all been reserved. Most retailers reckon they won't be able to put any more on the shelves until March. We have reason to believe Sony Europe may get hold of another batch before Christmas. If that happens, those machines will go to another round of pre-ordering rather than straight on to the shelves. Some shops have already set up a new queuing list where you can put your name down for a PS2 as they become available on a first-come, first-served basis. This is down to individual outlets and we suggest you sign-up as soon as possible to maximise your chances of getting a machine as soon as possible.

Q WILL I BE ABLE TO PLAY JAPANESE GAMES?

A No.

Q WILL I BE ABLE TO PLAY DVDS FROM OTHER REGIONS, SUCH AS THE US AND JAPAN?

A Yes and no. The UK PS2 can play Japanese DVDs but you'll need an NTSC compatible TV to watch them. US DVDs aren't compatible though, so cheap imports are out. Damn.

Q WILL I BE ABLE TO BROWSE THE INTERNET?

A Not yet. Unofficial modems are planned but release dates, price and capabilities remain unconfirmed.

Q WILL I BE ABLE TO PLAY GAMES ON-LINE?

A Eventually, but no one has announced a PS2 online game yet. The necessary peripherals won't be available until the middle of next year.

Q WILL OPM CONTINUE TO BE PUBLISHED?

A Yes. OPM is still the most popular games mag on the planet and will run for years.

Q WILL YOU STILL COVER PS1 GAMES?

A Oh yes. We'll bring you every scrap of info available on PS1, the biggest home console in the world. However, we'll also take an in-depth look at the PS2 with news, previews, reviews and features.

Q WILL THERE BE A SPECIALIST OFFICIAL PS2 MAGAZINE?

A Yes. See page 158 for more details of Official PS2.

Q HOW LONG BEFORE PS3?

A AAAAARGH! Are you never satisfied? At least five years, so your machine will not be obsolete for a long while yet.

FEATURE

THE LAUNCH GAMES

Not content with the biggest hardware launch in history Sony is determined PS2 will also have the largest launch game line-up ever

DRIVING GAMES FROM 24 NOVEMBER



F1 WORLD RACING CHAMPIONSHIP

Publisher: Ubi Soft
Developer: In-house

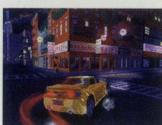
Arcade-biased action marks out this top flight racer. Expect to set lap records and barge Schuey into the gravel.



STUNT GP

Publisher: Virgin
Developer: Team 17

Radio controlled car stunt game that incorporates racing elements. Collect aeromiles according to your aerial hang time then soup up your vehicle.



MIDNIGHT CLUB

Publisher: Rockstar
Developer: Angel

Point-to-point racer that turns neon-lit streets into a speedway. Ignore the lights but avoid the on-rushing juggernauts.



RC REVENGE PRO

Publisher: Acclaim Developer: In-house

Return of the radio-controlled vehicles who want to prove that size isn't everything. A range of huge hazards come as standard.



RIDGE RACER V

Publisher: SCEA
Developer: Namco

Classic race series ups a gear to come on faster and smarter than ever. Shame about the borders incident (See the review on page 77).



SMUGGLER'S RUN

Publisher: Rockstar
Developer: Angel

Off-road driving game which mixes robbery, hill-climbing and resisting arrest. Ram a mate, steal his stash and scarper (Review on page 78).



TYPE S

Publisher: EA
Developer: In-house

Crisp-looking but wobbly-handling racer tuned for real cars, punishing circuits and plenty of opposite lock. One of the weakest titles in the pack.

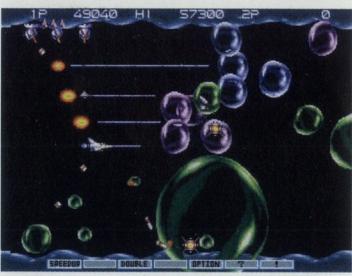
ACTION



DISNEY'S DINOSAUR

Publisher: Ubi Soft
Developer: In-house

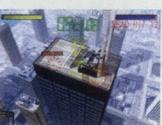
Licence of the year based on Disney's animated epic. Lead fellow dinos in a desperate intercontinental dash to escape extinction.



GRADIUS III AND IV

Publisher: Konami Developer: In-house

'80s arcade side-scrolling shooter resurrected for PS2 duty. Basic fly and shoot with a fancy rendered intro tacked-on.



SILENT SCOPE 2

Publisher: Konami
Developer: In-house

Prove yourself an ace marksman by taking out terrorists and saving the president. No plastic rifle but plenty of firepower (review on page 78).



TIMESPLITTERS

Publisher: Eidos
Developer: Free Radical Design

Obscenely pretty first-person shooter takes you time travelling with a satchel of heavy weaponry. Played for laughs, destined to be huge.



X-SQUAD

Publisher: EA
Developer: In-house

Third-person 3D shooter. You must send a four-strong team into battle with terrorists, destroy scenery and flip switches. Reviewed next month.



ETERNAL RING

Publisher: Crave Developer: From Software

First-person action-RPG involving ring accumulation to gain attacks and abilities. Plenty of text dialogue and mangling of orcs.

STRATEGY



THEME PARK WORLD

Publisher: EA Developer: Bullfrog

Build your own funfair then charge virtual punters a fortune to sample its pleasures. Totally unique strategy game.

PLATFORM



RAYMAN REVOLUTION

Publisher: Ubi Soft Developer: In-house

Sleeveless 3D leaping aimed at ankle-biters. Cute and colourful levels well-animated enemies and abundant power-ups.

SPORTS



FIFA 2001

Publisher: EA
Developer: Konami

The best-selling PS football game lays on the style with more animation, crisper collisions and over 10,000 players. Ooh, look at those sponsors logos. The N64 style-version rather than Pro.



ISS

Publisher: Konami
Developer: Konami

Japanese star kick 'em up comes to Europe with real player names and even faster, more fluid gameplay and tactics. The N64 style-version rather than Pro.



MADDEN 2001

Publisher: EA Developer: In-house

All-time great series invites you to taste the pain of American Football. Stunning detail, plush graphics and smart tactics.

A minimum of 26 titles will go on-sale on Day One (24 November) with another seven appearing shortly after. 13 more will arrive during December and another 50 games are planned for release by next March – that's an incredible 96 games on the shelf in just four months!

OPM's first PS2 reviews start on p.76



TOP GEAR DAREDEVIL

Publisher: Kemco Developer: In-house

Join a secret motor club and tear up the streets, chasing rivals, causing chaos and trying to escape from the law.



WILD WILD RACING

Publisher: Rage Games Developer: In-house

4WD off-road buggy driver that mixes time trials and stunt challenges across India, Iceland and the USA.

FIGHTING



DYNASTY WARRIORS 2

Publisher: Midway
Developer: Koei

Highly ambitious martial epic in which heroes wade into multiple foes and influence the course of 1,000-man battles. Looks great.



READY 2 RUMBLE BOXING: ROUND 2

Publisher: Midway
Developer: Midway

First swipe on PS2 from the tongue-in-cheek jabber. Loads of outrageous moves and gloriously OTT characters.



TEKKEN TAG TOURNAMENT

Publisher: SCEE
Developer: Namco

Best-selling bruiser doubles-up its 39 characters to deliver pixel-perfect arcade action and seven playing modes (Review on page 76).



STREETFIGHTER EX3

Publisher: Capcom
Developer: Capcom

A launch title in Japan, EX3 is another speedy update of the father of all beat 'em ups. The big change is that ten fighters can battle it out at once.



EVERGRACE

Publisher: Crave
Developer: From Software

From's follow up to *Eternal Ring*, this time featuring real time talking characters and an extensive character wardrobe. Odd.



KESSEN

Publisher: EA
Developer: Koei

Battle simulation set in feudal Japan. Command mighty armies and overcome RPG-style dilemmas to become top general. Strong Japanese stylings.



SUMMONER

Publisher: THQ Developer: Volition

Mythical quest focusing on a party of five adventurers and their demon-summoning abilities. Features realtime battles.

PUZZLE



AQUA AQUA-WETRIX 2

Publisher: SCI
Developer: Zed 2

In which you attempt to trap and boil off excess water through cunning use of falling scenery pieces and red-hot comets. Port of PC original, Wetrix



FANTAVISION

Publisher: SCEE Developer: In-house

Psychedelic pyrotechnical extravaganza. Engineer a stunning light show in this surprisingly addictive flash 'em up.



SUPER BUST-A-MOVE

Publisher: Acclaim
Developer: Taito

Worryingly addictive puzzler (all consoles must have one) in which bubbles must be burst and opponents buried. Cruelty in its purest cartoon form.



NHL 2001

Publisher: EA
Developer: In-house

Hard-hitting, puck-splitting US hockey sim. Crunching bodychecks plus plenty of skilful set-ups and snap shots. Should fall into our hands next issue.



SSX SNOWBOARD SUPER CROSS

Publisher: EA
Developer: In-house

Highly anticipated board-based fantasy racer. It may not be the PS2's *Wipeout* but it should loosen your lunch. Expect the review next issue.



SWING AWAY GOLF

Publisher: T&E Software
Developer: EA

Cartoon flavoured swinger with tantrum-throwing players, bonus costumes and its own customisable course generator.



INT'L TRACK & FIELD

Publisher: Konami
Developer: In-house

Athletics-heavy button-basher brings competitive four-play to PS2. Out-tap your mates to be first to the tape (Reviewed on page 79).

BY DECEMBER

Another 13 games will become available including those listed below:

- COOL POOL Take 2 Interactive
- DEAD OR ALIVE 2 SCEE
- F1 CHAMPIONSHIP SEASON 2000 EA
- F1 WORLD GRAND PRIX Konami
- H30 SURFING Take 2 Interactive
- MOTO GP SCEE
- NBA LIVE 2001 EA
- ORPHEN: SCION OF SORCERY Activision

BY MARCH 2001...

Sony is promising 50 more releases, here are some of the highlights:

- DARK CLOUD SCEE
- FORMULA 1 2001 SCEE
- GRAN TURISMO 3 SCEE
- KNOCKOUT KINGS 2001 EA
- PROJECT EDEN Eidos
- STAR WARS: STARFIGHTER LucasArts
- THE BOUNCER Square
- THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH EA
- UNREAL TOURNAMENT Infogrames
- WIPEOUT FUSION SCEE

FOR MORE ON ALL THESE GAMES
VISIT THE PUBLISHER WEB SITES,
DETAILS ON PAGE 42

REVIEW



Throws
and holds are
spectacular,
and can inflict
huge amounts
of damage if
timed well



If you really hurt them, your enemies arch with pain when they hit the ground, filling you with a sense of your own strength



A NEXT-GENERATION BEAT 'EM UP MEANS NEXT-GENERATION FIGHTERS



Tekken Tag Tournament

“At best it’s a slice of stylish, strategic beat ‘em up action”

FACTFILE

PUBLISHER	SCEE
DEVELOPER	Namco
RELEASE DATE	Late November
AGE RESTRICTION	11 and over
NUMBER OF PLAYERS	One to four
FORMAT	PlayStation 2

IF YOU LIKE THIS
THEN LOOK AT...

TEKKEN 3
Effectively the same game, and proof that PS1
can match its big brother for gameplay

When fighting games fight, there are two sides involved: *Tekken* and *Street Fighter*. If you're a pure-bred SF fan, the chances are you hate *Tekken*; in that case, *Tag Tournament* will provide you with many more shiny, high-resolution, multi-polygoned reasons for doing so. *Tekken* lovers, on the other hand, might be using this as their prime reason for preordering Sony's new toy. But first, a brief message to the unconverted.

If you come to *Tekken* from the *Street Fighter* series, you'll find it a frustrating mess of stop-start action that's anything but instinctive. But persevere, because one day everything will click. Or more accurately it'll crack. And crunch, and smash, and twist, and break, and all with such force, you'll wonder how you could have doubted it. The key to *Tekken*

has always been in finding your rhythm and combos and breaking your opponent's flow. Naturally, *Tag Tournament*'s style is no different. There are more characters, more moves, more hidden options, and a few minor changes to *Tekken* 3's delicate balance. Where the previous title demanded you master just one character at once, the tagging aspect forces you to pick two fighters and strategically switch them in and out of the action. *Tekken* Volleyball has been replaced by the far superior (but just as pointless) *Tekken* Bowling, which appears once you've unlocked half the hidden characters.

Unsurprisingly, though, the major change to the game is visual. Benefiting from a new coat of digital paint, the game looks superb. Clothing flows naturally around the fighters' bruised bodies, sculpted polygon faces grimace

and pout, and then there's the intricately constructed arenas... It's jaw-droppingly beautiful. It's also slightly irrelevant.

Y'see, there are two truths here. The first is that comparing *Street Fighter* and *Tekken* is foolish, because despite being superficially similar, they're as different from each other as *Gran Turismo* and *Speed Freaks*. The second is that, on their own, stunning graphics don't mean a gameplay revolution. Despite the impeccable characterisation and the hidden extras, *Tekken Tag Tournament* is no more than *Tekken Three And A Bit*.

However, it's by no means a failure. At worst it's just a stopgap until *Tekken 4*; at best, though, it's a slice of stylish, strategic beat 'em up action that carries a lasting, crunching impact. Depending on which side you're on, of course. ■

Ste Curran

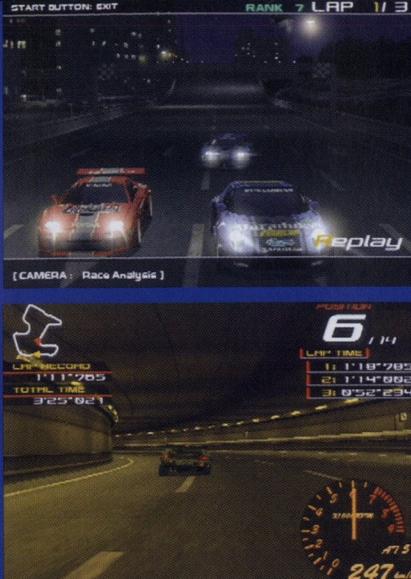
OFFICIAL UK
PlayStation
Magazine

VERDICT

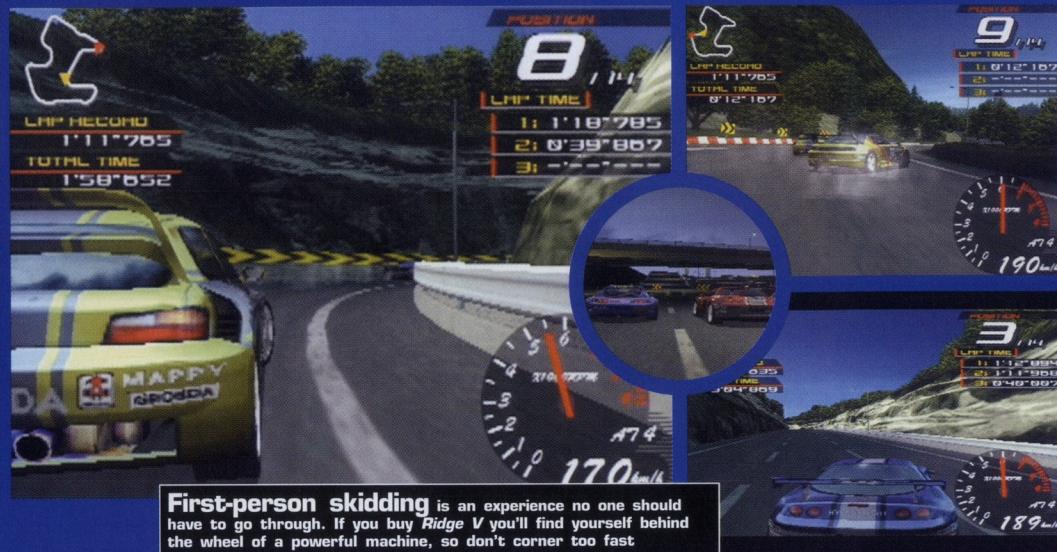
- GRAPHICS Gorgeous, powerful animation, with some wonderfully subtle touches 9
- GAMEPLAY That *Tekken* magic is still there, same as ever 8
- LIFESPAN Multiple difficulty levels and 14 characters to unlock. Lengthy 8

- OVERALL *Tekken Tag Tournament* sets a high standard on PS2. But it's not an unbeatable beat 'em up, and those who already own *Tekken 3* might want to wait for something else to take it down

8
OUT OF 10



Fast-paced action has always been the rock on which the *Ridge* games are built. Model number five is no exception



First-person skidding is an experience no one should have to go through. If you buy *Ridge V* you'll find yourself behind the wheel of a powerful machine, so don't corner too fast

WHEN TECHNO, VIRTUAL CITIES AND FINE-TUNING COLLIDE...



Ridge Racer V

“By far the fastest, flashiest visuals to grace any *Ridge* game”

FACTFILE

PUBLISHER	SCEE
DEVELOPER	Namco
RELEASE DATE	Late November
AGE RESTRICTION	None
NUMBER OF PLAYERS	One to two
FORMAT	PlayStation 2

IF YOU LIKE THIS
THEN LOOK AT...

GRAN TURISMO 2 (OPM55 10/10)
Staggering stats backed up by a deliriously
enjoyable game. PS1's best racing sim

Ridge Racer popped everyone's corks when it unveiled the awesome power of PlayStation back in 1995, so it seems right that it should return to launch PS2. What makes *Ridge Racer V* even more poignant is that it's so reminiscent of the original *Ridge*.

If this suggests a game that's rocketing in a retro direction, the graphics should come as an unexpected poke in the eye. These are by far the fastest, flashiest visuals to grace any *Ridge* game. Detailed towerblocks and underpasses whisk overhead while, closer to the track, wooded slopes and chicanes guarded by warning lamps glide past. The cars are the Jennifer Lopez side of ugly, too, with glossy (if unrealistic) reflective surfaces.

Innovation, however, certainly isn't *RRV*'s strong suit. Pick up the pad and it's

as if Team Solvalou, Packers and the ghosts have never been away, with grippier cars hugging those full-speed corners but powersliding providing the one true way to racing glory. Pick the right car and skating sideways through a hairpin is just a matter of easing off on the accelerator as you apply maximum lock, then, within a second or so, heaving on the power and straightening up. 'Just', of course, assumes that you've taken the correct line into the corner and that your timing is spot-on. Apart from that, it's a case of nipping around drivers who are only too happy to slide into your way. The one ray of newness is 'drafting' – the *Ridge* term for using a rival's slip-stream to your aerodynamic advantage.

Yet after praising its speed, its looks and its handling, there comes a time when we can't ignore two nagging flaws.

RRV has, to put it mildly, whopping black borders top and bottom. These simply aren't there in the Japanese and American game but are added because of our different PAL TV standard. OK, so this letterbox effect ensures that this PAL version actually runs faster than other versions, but it's a hideous price to pay when it could be avoided by an option to switch from 50 to 60MHz (modern SCART TVs can convert the US 60MHz NTSC signal). The other annoyance is the blue fogging that spoils the split-screen, Two-Player Mode – one of those glitches we hoped the power of PS2 would erase forever. Minus a mark for graphics, then.

Ridge Racer V is tremendous fun and a rock solid (if rather too easy) racer, but although it looks fantastic now, it's only a taste of the visual excellence to come. ■

Pete Wilton

OFFICIAL UK
PlayStation
Magazine
VERDICT

- GRAPHICS
- GAMEPLAY
- LIFESPAN

- Fast, fluid, beautiful... but damn those borders!
- No simulation, just wonderfully balanced arcade action
- Takes ages if you want to unlock every car

8

9

8

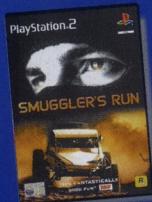
OVERALL

A flawed conversion of an excellent game. Perhaps not the masterpiece we were hoping for, it still amply demonstrates the speed and detail we can expect from PS2 racers

8
OUT OF 10

REVIEW

NO, NOT A FELON'S BOWEL CONDITION. SOMETHING MUCH MORE FUN...



Smuggler's Run

FACTFILE

PUBLISHER	Rockstar Games
DEVELOPER	Angel Studios
RELEASE DATE	Late November
AGE RESTRICTION	None
NUMBER OF PLAYERS	One to two
FORMAT	PlayStation 2

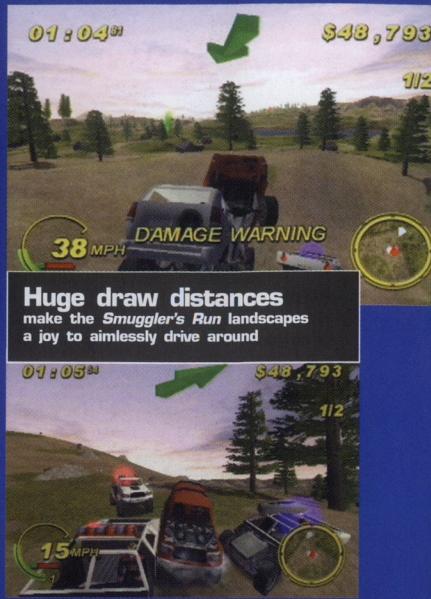
Fast cars, shady dealings and getting caught by the fuzz. Rockstar's *Grand Theft Auto 2* had all these things, and so does its latest offering, *Smuggler's Run*.

Hot-foot it across America in an attempt to collect 'hot' goods, such as stolen motor parts. Unlike *Driver* or *GTA*, though, the environment's more rural, and you find yourself caning it over hill and vale, trying to deliver the goods in record time, and avoiding border coppers.

It may not sound exciting on paper, but *Smuggler's Run* is a whole lot of fun. From the moment you throw your car over that first hill, the vehicle-handling is

excellent and the level of detail superb. Negotiating your way around the maps is simple, thanks to a pointer at the top of your screen. When the missions start hotting up, though, you don't have the luxury of moving as the crow flies. Flicking to the map screen to find the best cop-avoidance routes soon becomes second nature, though you're lucky if you hit upon a good one on your first crack. It can be frustrating having to start over again so frequently, and the lack of mission variety can become tiresome too. Don't let that put you off, though. SR is a top laugh and a respectable PS2 debut. ■

Al Bickham



OFFICIAL UK PlayStation Magazine

VERDICT

GRAPHICS	Absolutely lush, and the draw distance is huge 9
GAMEPLAY	Tanner meets Colin McRae. This is their child 8
LIFESPAN	Can be frustrating – you have to put it down from time to time 7

OVERALL	A joyful blend of off-road driving and gloriously tense against-the-clock chase scenes. It won't be everything to all men, but it's very good fun, and that's all you need to know
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8

OUT OF 10

GO FOR YOUR GUN IN KONAMI'S SUPERB ARCADE CONVERSION



Silent Scope

FACTFILE

PUBLISHER	Konami
DEVELOPER	KCEO
RELEASE DATE	Late November
AGE RESTRICTION	15 and over
NUMBER OF PLAYERS	One
FORMAT	PlayStation 2

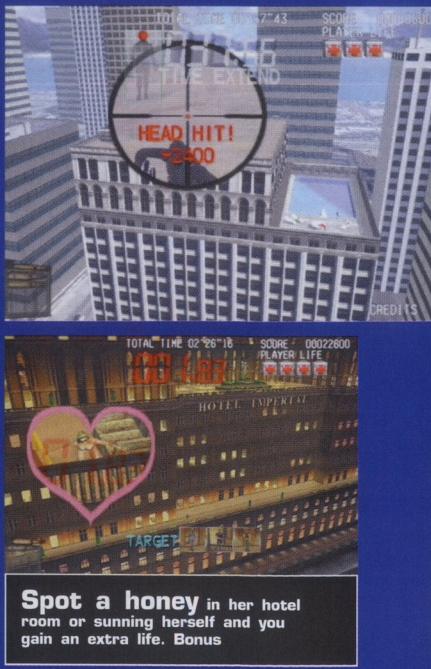
Really, it's amazing how a clever twist can enliven a tired genre. To all intents and purposes, the arcade version of *Silent Scope* is just another lightgun-toting blaster, yet by enabling the player to zoom in on targets with its front-mounted sniper rifle, it adds an additional level of depth. Of course, PS2 is without such an adornment and must make do with the Dual Shock 2 – but what could have been a disastrous transition actually works very well.

Cast as a SWAT team sniper, the player is dropped into a number of timed scenarios, wherein highlighted criminals

must be picked off one by one. As with the gameplay, the control mode is simple, with the player holding down the **L1** button for an overview of each level, while releasing the shoulder button to zoom in on the next target.

Getting to grips with these two systems and sussing the different levels of accuracy they afford takes time, but the game's entertaining level design and sheer creativity is reward enough. Ultimately, though, it is *Silent Scope*'s blend of pace and accuracy that makes it so much fun. An undoubtedly highlight of the initial wave of PS2 titles. ■

Steve Merrett



Spot a honey in her hotel room or sunning herself and you gain an extra life. Bonus

OFFICIAL UK PlayStation Magazine

VERDICT

GRAPHICS	Varied and well implemented level design 8
GAMEPLAY	Simple, but total accuracy is demanded 8
LIFESPAN	Has a hook that will keep drawing you in 8

OVERALL	A superb 'no-brainer' that is both addictive and entertaining. The joypad is a more than adequate replacement for the arcade machine's gun. Arcade titles don't get any slicker than this
---------	---

8

OUT OF 10

KONAMI'S CLASSIC IS QUICK OFF THE BLOCKS FOR PLAYSTATION 2...



ESPN International Track & Field

FACTFILE

PUBLISHER	Konami
DEVELOPER	KCEO
RELEASE DATE	Late November
AGE RESTRICTION	None
NUMBER OF PLAYERS	One to eight
FORMAT	PlayStation 2

When push comes to shove, athletics games are all much of a muchness. They all retain the button-pummelling control system championed by the original *Track & Field* and this PS2 update shows Konami has no plans to abandon it just yet. The familiar control system, however, is symptomatic of a game that, apart from a graphical renovation, offers no surprises and is thus a disappointment.

With the gameplay cast in stone, Konami has instead concentrated on vamping up the rough graphics of the PS1 games. The athletes now boast realistic

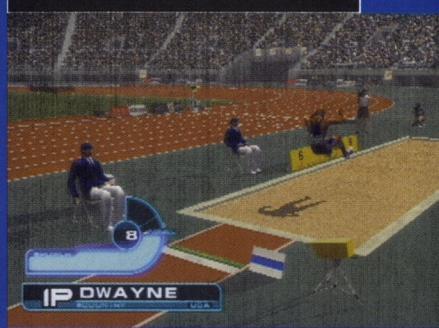
faces and better animation, while the camera angles are all the more impressive and the general level of presentation gleams brighter than an Olympic medal.

In terms of events, though, it's a case of something old and something new. The stalwart 100m, 110m hurdles and javelin are polished but cannot disguise the game's reliance on padding to gloss over the simplistic gameplay. Instead, the pole vault and trap shooting are the most skilled events. It's still entertaining when played in a competitive crowd, but brevity of the stages and the reliance on the veteran control method dates it. ■

Steve Merrett



The wooden spoon is likely to be the only award this iffy conversion of a PlayStation multiplayer classic wins



OFFICIAL UK PlayStation Magazine

VERDICT

■ GRAPHICS	Well-realised athletes and impressive presentation	7
■ GAMEPLAY	Ten events, but not enough actual content	5
■ LIFESPAN	Challenging, but only in the short term	6

■ OVERALL	An adrenaline shot of a game that is stuck between a rock and a hard place. The control method is the best one for such a title but limits gameplay. And the slick presentation grates as the novelty wears off
-----------	---

6

OUT OF 10

SMASH INTO THINGS AND RUN PEOPLE OVER



Midnight Club Street Racer

FACTFILE

PUBLISHER	Rockstar Games
DEVELOPER	Angel Studios
RELEASE DATE	Late November
AGE RESTRICTION	15 and over
NUMBER OF PLAYERS	One to two
FORMAT	PlayStation 2

Set in New York City and London, *Midnight Club* is an unabashedly amoral game which shoves you into a world of illegal street racing. The basic idea is to get from A to B passing through a series of checkpoints. You can cause as much mayhem as you wish because although the police will try to slow you down, they never bother to arrest you.

In Career Mode you drive around New York trying to get into a race. If you win, you can race off for a new car. The races themselves take place in city streets, back alleyways and buildings, and the more you play the better short cuts

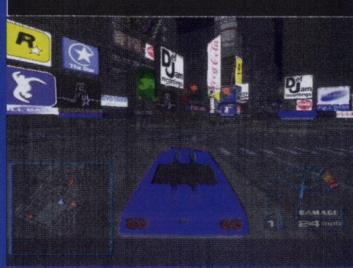
you'll find. Win all your races and go to the World Championships in London. Win there and you get to race the big cheese for the unofficial title.

There's a genuine feeling of speed as you spin into a corner, knocking boxes and pedestrians over your bonnet, and the multiplayer games are fun. But while the single-player game keeps you playing, as you need to win another race to get another car to win another race, there is something missing from the experience. Mainly it's because the best bit – crashing and mucking about – just loses you races but there's also a feeling of 'is this all?' ■

Richard Keith



Nightclubbing. Drive a car into pedestrians as the sun comes up, but don't expect to win that way



OFFICIAL UK PlayStation Magazine

VERDICT

■ GRAPHICS	Smooth with recognisable landmarks, but a tad dull	6
■ GAMEPLAY	Multiplayer mayhem is great but the single-player game soon dulls	8
■ LIFESPAN	Career Mode is a one-off but the multiplayer has legs	6

■ OVERALL	<i>Midnight Club Street Racer</i> is great fun and wonderfully amoral with real post-pub multiplayer appeal. But the Single-Player Modes lack depth and the graphics fail to impress
-----------	--

6

OUT OF 10

PS2 RÉSISTANCE



ALL THE NEWS
FROM THE WORLD
OF PLAYSTATION 2...

HORROR SEQUEL

BEYOND THE GRAVE

SILENT HILL 2 LOOKS SET TO STRIKE NEW TERROR INTO THE HEARTS OF GAMERS. BEWARE THE SOUNDS OF SILENCE

Konami has unveiled the first details of its horror shocker sequel *Silent Hill 2* and terrifying it is too...

In a short video at the Tokyo Game Show, OPM



Fogging hell. *Silent Hill 2* is shrouded in mist(ery)

was introduced to the lead character, James, who lives in a new district of scary town Silent Hill. Overdubbed with a spooky acoustic guitar soundtrack, James is seen stumbling around the foggy street of the Hill on a mission to

find out why he's receiving mail from his wife. A wife who's been dead for the last three years...

The game features ten new monsters, and follows the same format as the first: puzzle-based chills intercut with blood-splattering action. The video

shows a corpse dragging another body across the floor of a morgue before cutting back to a mysterious woman stroking James' face and whispering, "See, I'm not scary after all..." Er, sorry missus, you're terrifying. Expect it to be an 18 certificate. ■



GRAN TURISMO 3

PLAYING THE NAME GAME

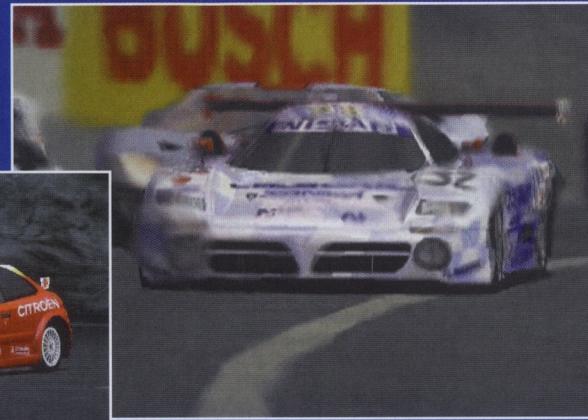
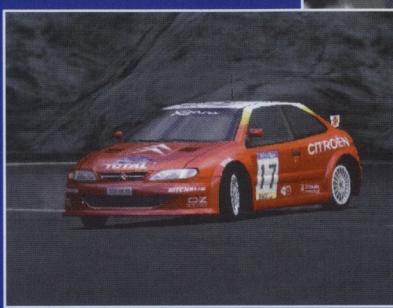
GT2000 UNDERGOES NAME CHANGE

The game formerly known as *GT2000* will now be known as *GT3*. According to SCEE, this is down to the fact that the game has slipped into 2001, so calling it *2000* may have caused untold confusion when it hit the shops.

The game is effectively an upgraded PS2 version of *GT2*, hopefully with a couple of new tracks and definitely with some incredible graphics. However, it's not to be confused with the 'true' sequel to *GT2* that creator Kazanori Yamauchi has in mind. That game's already in the early stages of development and

apparently features a huge array of on-line options.

GT3 will race along in February 2001 and, judging from the tracks we've played so far, will be quite stunning. ■



What's in a name? Well, a lot, according to SCEE. *GT2000* will now be *GT3*. The wait continues... ■

UNREAL

FOUR PLAY

UNREAL TOURNAMENT SUPER-SMOOTH, FOUR-WAY SPLIT SCREEN

At last we've got our hands on Infogrames' much-anticipated *Unreal Tournament*.

Initially a PlayStation game, the UT port from PC eventually came to PS2, offering more of an arcade spin than the original. The split-screen Four-Player Mode is running beautifully and the range of weapons is enormous, from fistcuffs to the nuclear-tipped

Redeemer – complete with guided missile that you can race through the bowels of the level. It's also compatible with keyboard and mouse to make the experience even more like playing a PC on your TV. Out before Christmas. ■



ACHTUNG!

WORLD WAR TOO



COMMANDOS 2 HITS PS2

The sequel to PC hit *Commandos* is on its way to PS2. It's a WW2 real-time strategy effort (developed by Pyro Studios) featuring elite British commandos infiltrating German and Japanese bases in bomb-shattered cities and steaming jungles.

Using a team of several specialists you must work out

how to avoid detection by the guards and combine your troops' skills to steal plans, impersonate enemy officers, blow up bases and generally shorten the war.

Commandos is best known for its incredible atmosphere and brilliant graphics, that look like scenes straight out of top war films such as *The Bridge On The River Kwai*. *Commandos 2* should swing into action next spring. ■

INCOMING!

GAMES ANNOUNCED BUT STILL A LONG WAY OFF...

WWF SMACKDOWN 3

THQ's inaugural grappling game is set to include Digimask technology. Fancy it up against The Rock? ■

SPIDER-MAN 2

Activision is delivering the sequel to the webbed-wonder hit for PS2. Marvel should be very proud. ■

A PAIR OF X-MEN GAMES

Film success has sharpened Activision's *X-Men* enthusiasm. One is a *Mutant Academy* sequel and the other is a 3D adventure game. ■

LEGACY OF KAIN: BLOOD OMEN 2

Not a *Soul Reaver* sequel (which is also underway) but a follow-up to the much older *Blood Omen*. Billed as a *Tenchi 2*-style stealth game. ■

SUPERMAN

Infogrames has snaffled the DC licence and is set to work on the definitive *Man Of Steel* game. ■

CRASH BANDICOOT

Universal license its marsupial hero to Konami for the next instalment of the series. ■

CANNON FODDER

Jon Hare has started work on a PS2 version of his top-down classic. He also fancies a go at doing *Sensible Soccer* for PS2... ■

LOTUS CHALLENGE

Virgin is making a fully licensed Lotus game that boasts 40 cars, 15 tracks and a James Bond Stunt Mode – like it! ■

COOL BOARDERS ALIEN

The PS2 follow-up to *CB4* will be coded by series creator UEP Systems rather than 989 – the less successful developer of the last instalment. ■

MICRO MANIACS 2

Codemasters' follow-up to its experimental running game. Expect better environments and more characters. ■

ALIEN COLONIAL MARINES

On its way from Fox Interactive, but not a PS2 version of *Aliens Vs Predator*, ACM is a first-person shooter with the obligatory shadows and acid-spitting monsters. ■

JURASSIC PARK III

The third episode of the dinosaur-baiting film series is released next summer and Konami has snaffled the game rights. ■

THE THING

Alien monster awakes from Arctic deep freeze feeling a bit peckish... B-movie film licence scooped by Konami. ■

SKY GUNNER

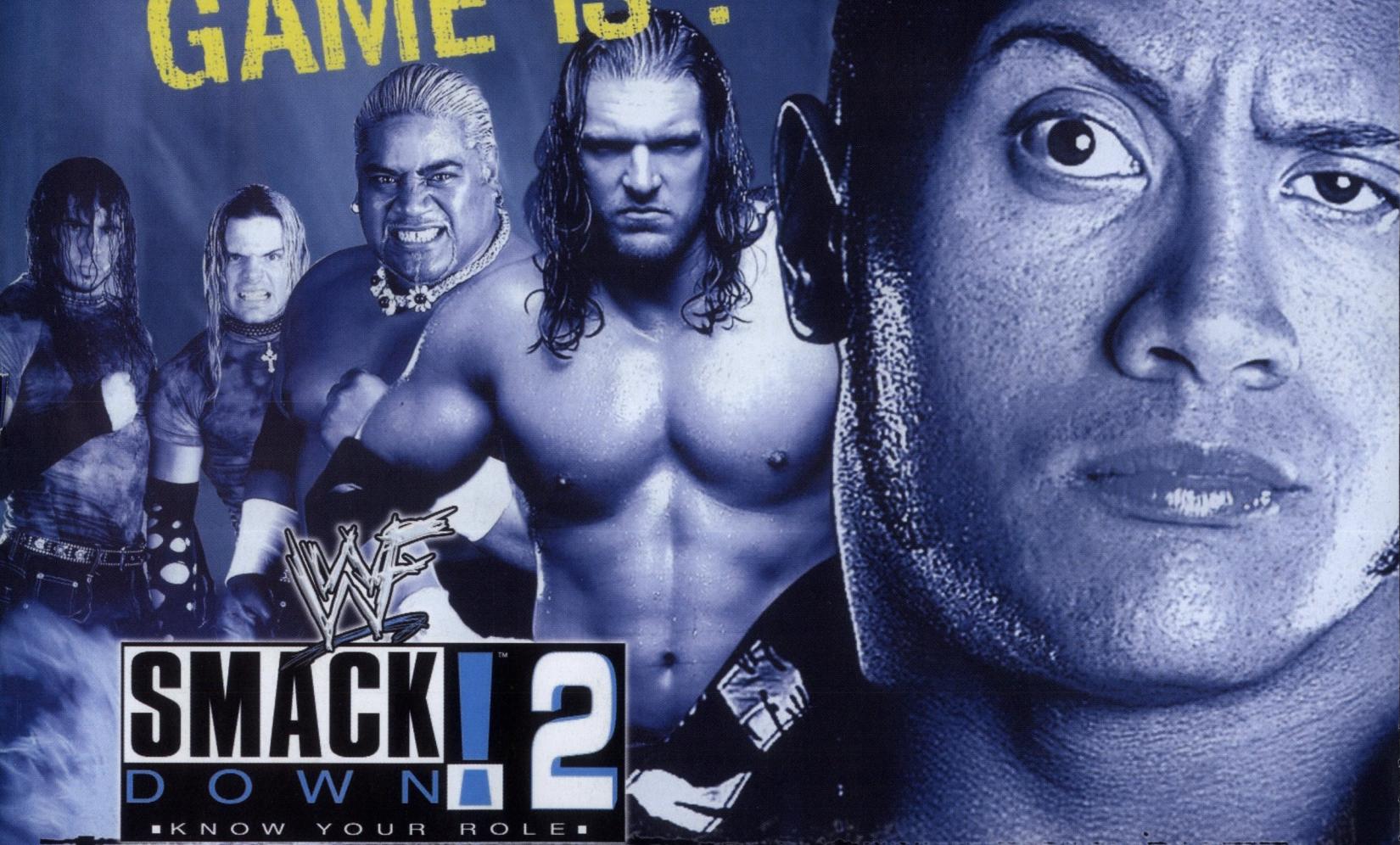
Sony's *Pilot Wings*-style air shooter pits you against *Final Fantasy*-style airships. Odd, but very good. ■

ALEX FERGUSON'S PLAYER MANAGER

Developer Anco is currently working on a next-generation version of its highly acclaimed footie management simulation. ■



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WHAT YOUR
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tab colour code

■ DRIVING GAME

■ ADVENTURE GAME
■ BEAT 'EM UP

■ SHOOT 'EM UP
■ RPG

■ SPORTS GAME
■ STRATEGY GAME

TOP SECRET

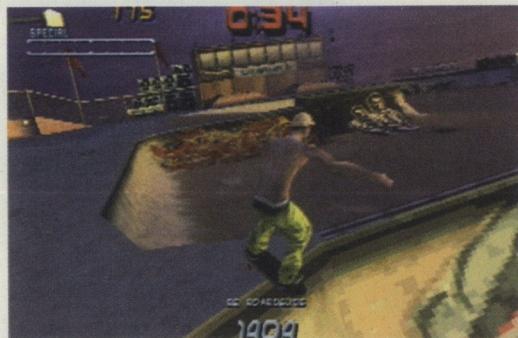
THERE'S A WORLD OF WHEELS IN THIS MONTH'S TOP SECRET. ONE SET POWERED BY PETROL, THE OTHER BY RUBBER-SOLED PUMPS. SLIDE AWAY...

WELCOME...



Anyone who didn't post ludicrously large scores in the *OPM59* demo will flip for the *Tony Hawk's 2* tips on page 94. Expect long strings of numbers to follow. For those of you unimpressed by the power of the plank, then gentlemen, start your engines. ■

Dan Mayers



Tony Hawk's 2: linked combo tricks are the way forward. Time to practise those manuals...

TIP OF THE MONTH

Since our maps should take you all the way to the chequered flag, you'll fly through *TOCA WTC* at a rate of knots. Once it's finished, what else is there to do? Plenty, thanks to these codes. Try spinning round at top speed in the souped-up bonus car. Even harder, switch on the nitro blast and try to get round the corners. Bring it on... ■

STAGE TRACK CODE

North American	Brands Hatch	MUSCLE (Gives your car extra power)
S. & Cent. American	Brasilia	MOON (Low gravity)
British	Snetterton	BACKWARDS (All tracks become mirror-images)
German	A1 Ring	STRETCH (All hills and bumps double in height)
Mediterranean	Oulton Park	ONE2MANY (Blurred-motion picture)
Japanese	TI Aida	SHINY (All cars become chrome-plated)
Australian	Surfer's Paradise	NITRO (Press □ during race for instant boost)
Pan-American	Mexico City	DRIVER (Gives your car bouncy suspension)
European	Adelaide	KABOOM (All rumble strips and kerbs explode)
Asia-Pacific	Buenos Aires	BRICK (Indestructible car)
World	Road America	DOTTY (Makes bonus cars tougher to drive)



GAME GUIDES

OFFICIAL
SOLUTION!

- TOCA World Touring Cars..... 86**
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2 . 94

DO IT YOURSELF

- Team Buddies** 84
Parasite Eve II 84
In Cold Blood 84
Tenchi 2: Birth Of The Assassins 84

POWERLINE TIPS

- Crash Team Racing..... 85**
Spider-Man..... 85

TOP TIPS

- X-Men Mutant Academy** 84
Small Soldiers..... 84



Do It Yourself

BUDDIES BLASTING BITS OUT OF EACH OTHER, EVIL GENETIC MONSTERS, ROBOTS, NINJAS... YES, IT'S BEEN A BUSY MONTH

REQUESTED BY CRAIG CHAMBERS, MAIDENHEAD

HOW TO... BE THE HERO

TEAM BUDDIES

Explosive action in a world gone mad, *Team Buddies* is hilariously entertaining. And it enables you to choose whether you wish to be a team player or a gung-ho cavalier – as this tip demonstrates. Have your buddy build two commandos and switch to one of them, instructing the others to make a rocket launcher (make sure you get to it first, though). With the weapon equipped, hold **L2** to let your people build whatever they like and then, using **R2** (Binocular Mode), highlight your base and tap **□** to set the team command to 'defend'. Now target-lock the enemy base and strafe around it while firing (**△**). They'll drop everything to stop you, and even if they do kill you, your mates will be there to finish the job. ■



REQUESTED BY IAN BENNETT, LONDON

HOW TO... BEAT THE SPECTRE ROBOT IN COLD BLOOD

To short-circuit the Spectre robot (which appears once you access the laptop's inbox), run back to where you first encountered the minibots and go through the middle door. Get the fuse from the safe and enter the room nearby to find a giant robotic arm. Link the Remora to the console and prime the pods to receive power, then activate the mechanism. Note which lever moves the arm and go back to the corridor. Enter the room opposite the arms room, and go up the stairs to insert the fuse by the lockers. Using the

Remora, send power to the pods, save and lead the robot back to the arm. When it appears at the arm, run to the lever and pull. With the robot destroyed, take its key chip. The lift can now be used. ■



REQUESTED BY JON PATTON, HULL

HOW TO... BATTLE NUMBER 9

PARASITE EVE II

Although a little too easy, there are some tough bits in this *Resi*-clone, your first fight with Number 9 being a case in point. Attach grenades, grenade pistol and other useful weapons before saving at the telephone. When your foe jumps down (after you've checked the lift and run back), fire a grenade then run back just past a junction box. Shoot bullets at him, walking forward to avoid his paralysing grenades (use Metabolism if hit). As he gets near the box, push **□** to target and blast. This

will electrocute him, enabling you to fire another grenade. Repeat this with the other junction boxes. At the lift (and the last box), get your timing right to inflict more damage. ■



REQUESTED BY JAYNE TODDINGTON, LYME REGIS

HOW TO... AVOID BEING SEEN

TENCHU 2: BIRTH OF THE ASSASSINS

Tenchu 2 is all about dexterity and ninja-like stealth, and both are needed more than ever in Gohda Castle. The fifth guard is always a problem because he's a hawk-eyed, big-nosed jobsworth. But if you want that perfect rating you've got to remain undetected. Once you've climbed the stairs and arrived at the crossroads, go down the path, then crouch as you cross the fire (along the left side). Here's the difficult part: you need to move towards the guard inch by inch, but if he moves

in your direction you must start to shuffle back. Time your movements so you reach him before he turns around, when you can quickly decapitate the infuriating git. ■



TOP TIPS

X-MEN: MUTANT ACADEMY

Not just anyone can be a superhuman freak, you know. You've got to study hard...

Third-choice costumes

Using whichever mutant you like, graduate from the Academy with perfect A-grades and you'll unlock that particular fighter's third costume. Select by highlighting and pushing the **○** button

Unlock bosses

By beating the game with at least four characters, you'll unlock the bosses (one at a time)

Unlock FNV intro

Complete the game with any character in Arcade Mode to unlock their FNV intro in Cerebro Mode

Unlock FNV outro

Graduate with any of the characters to open up their outro FNV in Cerebro Mode

Behind-the-scenes pictures

Beat the game with all of the characters in special movie costumes (select them with **□** to unlock extra pics in Cerebro Mode)

Character comic pictures

Complete ten rounds with any character in Survival Mode (normal costume) to unlock his or her comic pictures in Cerebro Mode

Movie pictures

Finish 20 rounds with any character in Survival Mode while in his or her movie costume. This will unlock the pictures

Historical comic pictures

Complete the game with every character in their regular costumes to access the historical comic pics in Cerebro Mode

Super code

To unlock everything, go to the Main menu and press **SELECT** **↑** **L2** **□** **L1** **R2**. A noise will confirm that the cheat has worked. You can now play Arcade Mode as the bosses

SMALL SOLDIERS

All Weapons	Enter △ ▲ ○ □
Enter	○ × □ × ○
a password	□ ○ × ○ □
Invincibility	Enter △ ○ □ ○
Enter	○ × ○ □ ○
a password	□ ○ × ○ □

TOP SECRET

OFFICIAL UK PlayStation® POWERLINE

THE LATEST CHEATS STRAIGHT FROM THE BRAIN AT SONY

The official PlayStation Powerline is a unique service holding a wealth of immediate gaming advice, available at the touch of a button.

Can't see the cheat you want here? Give the Powerline a try. Just call the number below. Once connected press 0 to go to the game menu. Now just key in the five figure code printed top left on every game disc (and featured alongside the cheats here). If there are any tips and cheats, you'll hear them here, so have a pen and paper ready.

Alternatively, phone the Powerline and wait to hear the range of other options including the latest release schedule. Just press the button required. What could be easier?

Call the Sony Powerline on **09064 765 765***

*Touch Tone activated service. Calls charged at 60 pence per minute. Please seek permission from the bill payer before calling.
Service provider - Telecom Potential, P.O. Box 66, Clevedon, BS21 7QX

CRASH TEAM RACING

POWERLINE 02105

Enter the following codes at the main menu. If you've entered them correctly, you'll hear a dinging sound effect. They all work within the Time Trial, Arcade, Versus and Battle Modes.

To access Dr N Tropy, press and hold the **□** and **△** buttons, then use the following combination of buttons: **↓, ←, →, ↑, ↓, →**

To access Pinstripe, press and hold the **□** and **△** buttons, then **←, →, □, ↓, →, ↓**

To access Papu Papu, press and hold the **□** and **△** buttons, then **←, □, →, ↓, →, □, ←, ↓**

To access Ripper Roo, press and hold the **□** and **△** buttons, then **→, □, □, ↓, →**

To access Penta Penguin, press and hold the **□** and **△** buttons, then **↓, →, □, ↓, ←, □, ↑**

To access Komodo Joe, press and hold the **□** and **△** buttons, then **↓, □, ←, ←, □, →, ↓**



CALL **09064 765 765**

PRESS **0** FOR THE
GAME MENU

PRESS **#** FOR THE
POWER MENU

ENTER THE FIVE DIGIT CODE
LOCATED ON YOUR GAME DISC
FOR INSTANT GAME HELP

ACCESS THE
SOFTWARE RELEASE
INFORMATION SECTION



SPIDER-MAN

POWERLINE 02886

To enter the following codes for *Spider-Man*, go to the Cheats menu in the special section of the main menu, and select the Cheats option. If you enter the code correctly, the on-screen display will shake from side to side. To try on the costumes, go to the Costumes option and select your desired outfit. For the rest just follow these instructions

To unlock the symbiotic Spider-Man cheat costume, enter the following letters: B, L, K, S, P, I, D, R

To unlock the futuristic Spider-Man costume, enter: T, W, N, T, Y, N, D, N

To unlock the Captain Universe Spider-Man costume, enter the following letters, with a space between the first S and the first C: S, C, O, S, M, I, C

To unlock the unlimited Spider-Man costume, which accesses a Stealth Mode, enter: P, A, R, A, L, L, E, L

To unlock the scarlet Spider-Man costume, enter the following letters, with a space between the letters R and S: L, E, T, T, E, R, S

To unlock the amazing big man costume, enter: A, M, Z, B, G, M, A, N

To unlock the Ben Reilly costume, enter: B, N, R, E, I, L, L, Y

To unlock the Peter Parker costume, enter the following letters, with a space between S and S: M, J, S, S, T, U, D

To unlock the quick-change Spider-Man costume, enter: A, L, M, S, T, P, K, R

To unlock the storyboards, enter the following letters: C, G, O, S, S, E, T, T. Now go to the gallery and you'll be able to view 'em all.

To unlock the game covers, enter: A, L, L, S, I, X, C, C. Gain, go to the gallery.

To unlock the Level Select option, enter: X, C, L, S, I, O, R. Now go to the Special option and pick Level Select.

To unlock the comic collection, enter the following letters with a space between the second letter C and the B: C, M, C, B, U, F, F. Go to the gallery.

To unlock all movies, enter the following with a space between the letters H and E: W, A, T, C, H, E, M. Go to the gallery.

To view all the characters, enter the following with a space between the letters W and E: C, V, I, E, W, E, M. Go to the gallery.

To unlock the invulnerability cheat, enter the following letters: R, U, S, T, C, R, S, T

To play the game with a big-headed Spider-Man, enter: D, U, L, U, X

PETROL-HEADED FRIENDS GETTING YOU DOWN? WISH YOU WERE MORE OF A GREASE MONKEY? DON'T KNOW YOUR O-RING FROM YOUR HOCKENHEIMRING? THEN IT'S TIME FOR OUR TOCA CRASH COURSE...

OFFICIAL
SOLUTION!

TOCA World Touring Cars

KEY



GENERAL DRIVING STRATEGY

There are two different types of start for you to contend with: rolling and standing. Rolling starts are straightforward – basically, you just keep the accelerator button pushed down to keep moving. Standing starts are a little trickier. You'll see a sequence of lights (red, red, green) before you can go. DON'T keep your finger on the accelerator waiting for the start – you'll just spin your wheels as your opponents scream off into the distance. The trick here is to keep your engine revving steadily (try to keep the rev counter about two markers below the red line) then, when the green light goes, floor it! If all goes well, you should jump a couple of places.

There is a good general tactic which enables you to jump several places in one go. You can, and should, use it regardless of which racetrack you're on...

When you take off from the start of a race, manoeuvre your car to the side of the road. This means you'll be able to

take the first corner on the 'inside'. Leave your braking until late (if you brake at all) and you can use your opponents' cars as 'buffers'. Just bash into them sideways-on, hopefully knocking a few of them off the track, then speed off into the distance. Heh heh, now you've jumped about five places.

Don't be too worried about damaging your car's body: minor collisions don't look too pretty, and they make some scary crunching sounds, but it's very rare for them to make any difference to your car's performance.

The set-ups on these pages are a guide to making your car as easy as possible to drive on each circuit. Note that the harder you make the suspension, the quicker the car's steering responds, likewise the anti-roll mechanism. The drawback is that, if you're not careful, you're more likely to lose control. And remember: in the later stages of the Championship, the cars get increasingly powerful and harder to control. You might need to fine-tune the settings (especially the gears) when you get that far. Good luck, driver.

THE GARAGE

There's a wide selection of cars to race in Time Trial or Free Race Mode. Most are available straightaway ('works' cars) but bonus vehicles are unlocked according to the points tally you notch up throughout your career. The bonus cars are best regarded as novelties: although they're fun to try out, they don't really hold their own against the 'works' touring cars. Generally speaking, apart from the occasional horsepower variations, touring cars are pretty much alike. However, it's worth noting that FWD (front-wheel drive) vehicles tend to handle better than the RWD (rear-wheel drive) ones. This really becomes apparent in the later stages. The 4x4 models are the best handlers of all. When you eventually earn the 140 points that grant you entrance to the International stage, you may find you only get offered contracts with teams supplying the more awkward RWD cars. This can prove frustrating when you're desperately trying to earn crucial points to enter the World stage, so when you start the game (at the National stage), we suggest you try accumulating those 140 points by taking part in all seven initial series. Do this and you may find you're offered some of the more compliant FWD models at International level.

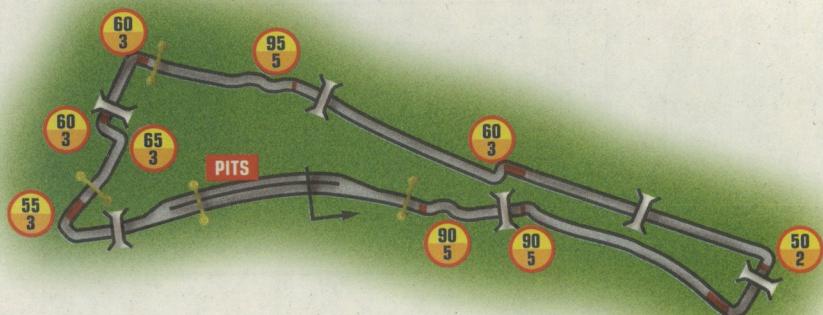
Car name	Power	Weight	Drive	Points needed
Dodge Viper	Bonus Car	RWD	460	105
Ford Mustang GT	Bonus Car	RWD	260	30
Mitsubishi FTO	Bonus Car	FWD	198	Instantly available
Audi TT	Bonus Car	4X4	225	15
Peugeot 306	Bonus Car	FWD	167	Instantly available
Plymouth Prowler	Bonus Car	RWD	250	50
Toyota Celica	Bonus Car	4X4	251	75
Subaru Impreza	Bonus Car	4X4	280	275
Lotus 340R	Bonus Car	RWD	190	140
AC Superblower	Bonus Car	RWD	355	225
Mitsubishi GTO	Bonus Car	4X4	280	180
Mazda RX7	Bonus Car	RWD	280	335
AC Aceca	Bonus Car	RWD	340	400
TVR Cerbera Speed 12	Bonus Car	RWD	800	470
Bentley Hunaudieres	Bonus Car	RWD	623	545

ADELAIDE (AUSTRALIA)



Suspension	3 notches toward Hard
Anti-roll	2 notches toward Hard
Gears	1st (Lowest setting)
	2nd (4 notches up)
	3rd (4 notches up)
	4th (5 notches up)
	5th (5 notches up)
	6th (5 notches up)
General	Downforce (2 notches toward Max)
	Brake bias (3 notches toward Front)

SURFER'S PARADISE (AUSTRALIA)



Suspension	3 notches toward Hard
Anti-roll	2 notches toward Hard
Gears	1st (Lowest setting) 2nd (4 notches up) 3rd (5 notches up) 4th (5 notches up) 5th (5 notches up) 6th (5 notches up)
General	Downforce (1 notch toward Min) Brake bias (3 notches toward Front)



BATHURST (AUSTRALIA)



Suspension	Middle setting
Anti-roll	Middle setting
Gears	1st (Lowest setting) 2nd (5 notches up) 3rd (6 notches up) 4th (7 notches up) 5th (5 notches up) 6th (4 notches up)
General	Downforce (2 notches toward Min) Brake bias (1 notch toward Front)



WATKIN'S GLEN (NORTH AMERICA)



Suspension	Middle setting
Anti-roll	2 notches toward Soft
Gears	1st (Lowest setting) 2nd (5 notches up) 3rd (5 notches up) 4th (6 notches up) 5th (5 notches up) 6th (5 notches up)
General	Downforce (3 notches toward Min) Brake bias (2 notches toward Rear)



ROAD AMERICA (NORTH AMERICA)

Suspension	2 notches toward Soft
Anti-roll	Middle setting
Gears	1st (Lowest setting) 2nd (4 notches up) 3rd (5 notches up) 4th (6 notches up) 5th (5 notches up) 6th (5 notches up)
General	Downforce (1 notch toward Min) Brake bias (Middle setting)

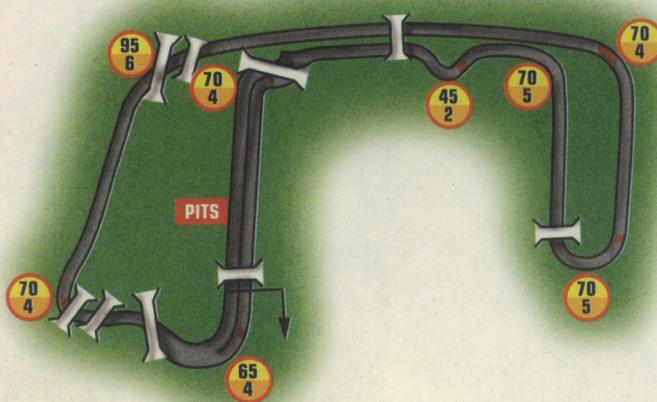


LAGUNA SECA (NORTH AMERICA)

Suspension	1 notch toward Soft
Anti-roll	2 notches toward Hard
Gears	1st (Lowest setting) 2nd (4 notches up) 3rd (4 notches up) 4th (5 notches up) 5th (5 notches up) 6th (5 notches up)
General	Downforce (Middle setting) Brake bias (2 notches toward Front)



VANCOUVER (NORTH AMERICA)



Suspension	Fully Hard
Anti-roll	Fully Hard
Gears	1st (Lowest setting) 2nd (4 notches up) 3rd (4 notches up) 4th (4 notches up) 5th (4 notches up) 6th (4 notches up)
General	Downforce (Max setting) Brake bias (3 notches toward Front)

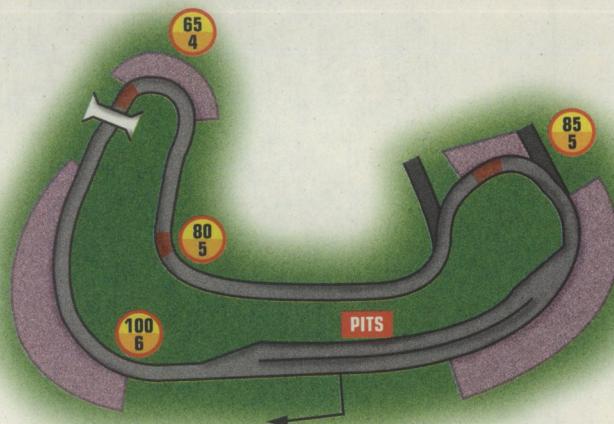


SILVERSTONE (GREAT BRITAIN)

Suspension 2 notches toward Hard
Anti-roll 1 notch toward Hard
Gears 1st (Lowest setting)
2nd (5 notches up)
3rd (5 notches up)
4th (5 notches up)
5th (5 notches up)
6th (5 notches up)
General Downforce (1 notch toward Min),
Brake bias (1 notch toward Front)



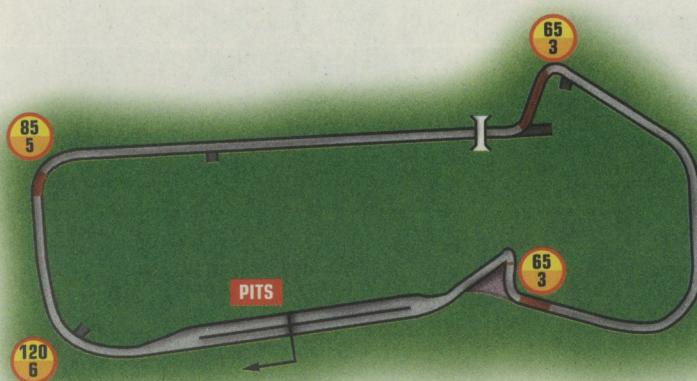
BRANDS HATCH (GREAT BRITAIN)



Suspension 2 notches toward Soft
Anti-roll Middle setting
Gears 1st (Lowest setting)
2nd (4 notches up)
3rd (4 notches up)
4th (5 notches up)
5th (4 notches up)
6th (4 notches up)
General Downforce (Middle setting)
Brake bias (1 notch toward Front)



SNETTERTON (GREAT BRITAIN)



Suspension 3 notches toward Hard
Anti-roll 2 notches toward Hard
Gears 1st (1 notch up from Lowest)
2nd (5 notches up)
3rd (5 notches up)
4th (5 notches up)
5th (5 notches up)
6th (5 notches up)
General Downforce (1 notch toward Min)
Brake bias (Middle setting)



ULTON PARK (GREAT BRITAIN)

Suspension 2 notches toward Hard
 Anti-roll 1 notch toward Hard
 Gears 1st (Lowest setting)
 2nd (5 notches up)
 3rd (5 notches up)
 4th (5 notches up)
 5th (5 notches up)
 6th (5 notches up)
 General Downforce (1 notch toward Max)
 Brake bias (2 notches toward Front)



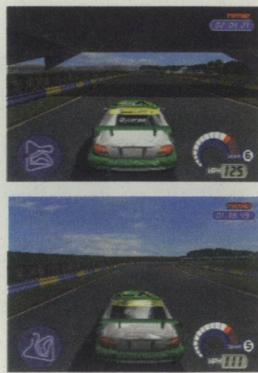
BUENOS AIRES (SOUTH & CENTRAL AMERICA)

Suspension Fully Hard
 Anti-roll Middle setting
 Gears 1st (Lowest setting)
 2nd (5 notches up)
 3rd (5 notches up)
 4th (6 notches up)
 5th (5 notches up)
 6th (5 notches up)
 General Downforce (Middle setting)
 Brake bias (3 notches toward Front)



BRASILIA (SOUTH & CENTRAL AMERICA)

Suspension 3 notches toward Hard
 Anti-roll Middle setting
 Gears 1st (3 notches from Lowest setting)
 2nd (5 notches up)
 3rd (6 notches up)
 4th (6 notches up)
 5th (5 notches up)
 6th (5 notches up)
 General Downforce (2 notches toward Min)
 Brake bias (1 notch toward Front)

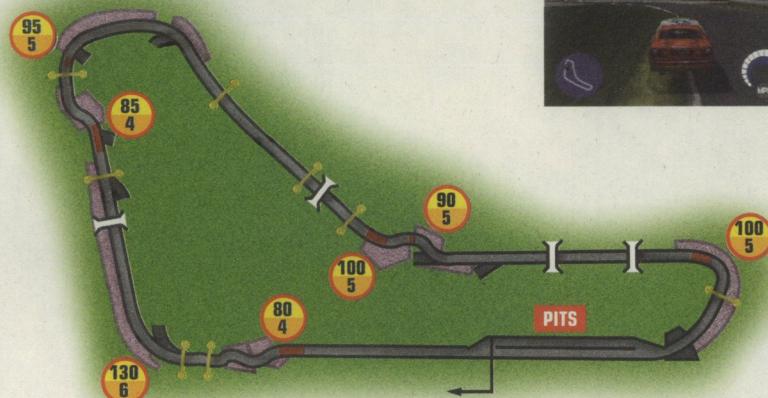


MEXICO CITY (SOUTH & CENTRAL AMERICA)

Suspension 3 notches toward Hard
 Anti-roll 3 notches toward Hard
 Gears 1st (3 notches from Lowest setting)
 2nd (5 notches up)
 3rd (5 notches up)
 4th (6 notches up)
 5th (5 notches up)
 6th (5 notches up)
 General Downforce (3 notches toward Min)
 Brake bias (1 notch toward Rear)

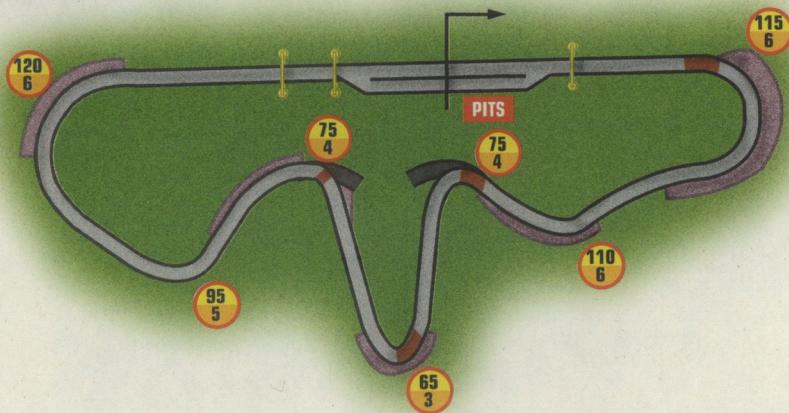


MONZA (EUROPE)



Suspension 2 notches toward Hard
 Anti-roll 3 notches toward Hard
 Gears 1st (3 notches from Lowest setting)
 2nd (5 notches up)
 3rd (6 notches up)
 4th (6 notches up)
 5th (5 notches up)
 6th (5 notches up)
 General Downforce (Fully Min)
 Brake bias (3 notches toward Rear)

DIJON (EUROPE)



Suspension Middle setting
 Anti-roll Middle setting
 Gears 1st (Lowest setting)
 2nd (5 notches up)
 3rd (5 notches up)
 4th (6 notches up)
 5th (5 notches up)
 6th (5 notches up)
 General Downforce (Middle setting),
 Brake bias (1 notch toward Rear)



CATALUNYA (EUROPE)

Suspension 2 notches toward Hard
 Anti-roll 3 notches toward Hard
 Gears 1st (2 notches from Lowest setting)
 2nd (5 notches up)
 3rd (5 notches up)
 4th (5 notches up)
 5th (5 notches up)
 6th (5 notches up)
 General Downforce (1 notch toward Max)
 Brake bias (Middle setting)

**NÜRBURGRING (GERMANY)**

Suspension 1 notch toward Hard
 Anti-roll 1 notch toward Hard
 Gears 1st (1 notch from Lowest setting)
 2nd (5 notches up)
 3rd (6 notches up)
 4th (6 notches up)
 5th (5 notches up)
 6th (5 notches up)
 General Downforce (Middle setting)
 Brake bias (1 notch toward Front)

**A1 RING (GERMANY)**

Suspension 2 notches toward Soft
 Anti-roll 1 notch toward Hard
 Gears 1st (Lowest setting)
 2nd (5 notches up)
 3rd (6 notches up)
 4th (6 notches up)
 5th (5 notches up)
 6th (5 notches up)
 General Downforce (1 notch toward Max)
 Brake bias (3 notches toward Front)



HOCKENHEIMRING (GERMANY)

Suspension	3 notches toward Hard
Anti-roll	1 notch toward Hard
Gears	1st (Lowest setting)
	2nd (5 notches up)
	3rd (5 notches up)
	4th (5 notches up)
	5th (5 notches up)
	6th (5 notches up)
General	Downforce (1 notch tow
	Brake bias (Middle sett



TI AIDA (JAPAN)



Suspension	1 notch toward Hard
Anti-roll	1 notch toward Soft
Gears	1st (Lowest setting)
	2nd (5 notches up)
	3rd (5 notches up)
	4th (5 notches up)
	5th (5 notches up)
	6th (5 notches up)
General	Downforce (1 notch toward Max)
	Brake bias (1 notch toward Front)



SUGO (JAPAN)



Suspension	2 notches toward Hard
Anti-roll	1 notch toward Hard
Gears	1st (1 notch from Lowest setting) 2nd (5 notches up) 3rd (5 notches up) 4th (6 notches up) 5th (5 notches up) 6th (5 notches up)
General	Downforce (2 notches toward Max) Brake bias (1 notch toward Front)

SUZUKA (JAPAN)



Suspension	2 notches toward Soft
Anti-roll	2 notches toward Hard
Gears	1st (Lowest setting)
	2nd (5 notches up)
	3rd (5 notches up)
	4th (6 notches up)
	5th (5 notches up)
	6th (5 notches up)
General	Downforce (2 notches toward Max)
	Brake bias (2 notch toward Front)

THERE'S ONLY ONE PROBLEM WITH THE OTHERWISE PERFECT TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 2: IT'S AS HARD AS A TON OF NAILS. LUCKILY THOUGH, OPM IS ON HAND TO OIL YOUR TRUCKS AND SOFTEN THOSE BRUTAL LANDINGS

Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2

**OFFICIAL
SOLUTION!**

Take all the directions from the start point, unless otherwise stated. Where we mention an example trick, it includes rotation (a Judo with as much rotation as possible). A combo grind involves grinding, jumping and doing a trick, then landing in a grind. Let's go

THE HANGER - MULLET FALLS

1) THE HALF-PIPE

The place to pull lots of average tricks. Don't touch anything and you'll be taken there automatically. Jumping alternately from each side of the half-pipe, X-Games style, will rack up a good score. Go for big air, lots of rotation and varied tricks for the most points.



2) THE SECRET HALF-PIPE

At the end of the obvious half-pipe is a propeller on the wall. Grinding on this will bust open the wall and you can access a chilled wind tunnel. Here you'll find a half-pipe and the added bonus of extra points pick-ups scattered in the air.



3) THE BIG GRIND

In the park, you pass two quarter-pipes. Turn and launch off the one nearest the end wall, combo grind along a high rail, jumping the Rollin' Gap. Drop off the end, smash the glass and land in a grind and combo as far round as you can without falling off. Points galore.



4) THE RAIL DROP

Opposite the start point is a banner on the wall with a grind pole top and bottom. Grind on the quarter-pipe (away from the end wall), transfer on to the lower banner grind pole, drop back on to the quarter-pipe and continue combo-grinding round. Accumulate a-plenty.



5) THE 'RAIL-GUIDED MISSILE'

The base of the glass partition between the plane and helicopter and a small lip parallel to it are great grind poles. Get up plenty of speed and grind along the lip, combo transfer on to the partition and combo grind along that right to the end. Using the right trick you can earn up to 10,000 points. Bargain.



THE SCHOOL II - SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

1) THE (ALMOST) HALF-PIPE

Pretty much the only decent half-pipe in this level is in fact two quarter-pipes facing each other. From the start point, go left round the first corner and you'll see it dead ahead between the wall on the left and the doorway in the centre of the wall in front.



2) BALCONY 2 AWNING!

Go left of the tree at the start and on to the railings. Hit the left wall the other side of them and boneless off the edge. You should land on a platform. Boneless off the end and hold a trick for as long as possible. Land on the next platform for up to 36,000 points.



3) UPHILL STRUGGLE

To get 15,000 points for a short uphill rail travel a little to the right from the start. Pass a ramp going down to the right and you'll reach another with a rail in the middle. Combo grind up from the bottom and you can fit three or four tricks in before jumping off.



4) LEAP OF FAITH

Instead of landing on the platform (see Balcony 2 Awning!), simply boneless right over the railings and hold a Judo for as long as possible. Land it right and you can get 20,000 points. Land it perfect and you can get even more.



5) HUGE TRANSFER!

Jump the Leap Of Faith (see Leap Of Faith) and take the first left. On the left wall are two separate quarter-pipes. Get enough speed up and hit one at an angle so you fly gracefully through the air and land on the other quarter-pipe. If you can Airwalk the transfer, you'll get up to 20,000 points.



MARSEILLES – FRANCE**1) UP!**

Turn left 90° and go down the slight ramp to a quarter-pipe. Stop and turn round. In front of you should be a square end of two quarter-pipes. On the small ramp is a question mark and an arrow pointing upward. Pull the biggest trick you can (a Judo is good). It's worth up to 60,000 points if you land it.

**2) BANNER GRIND**

Head down the left ramp to the quarter-pipe (see Up!). This time however, jump off the ramp at an angle to the right, and hold up so you leave the quarter-pipe. Hold **A** as you launch and you should grind along the banner rail high off the ground. Combo grind for as long as you can to get maximum points.

**3) TROIS BASSINS**

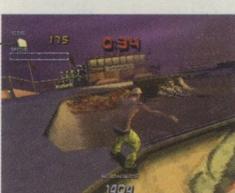
Passing under the banner grind (see Banner Grind) leads to three adjoining bowls. This is a great place to practice your vert repertoire because, wherever you land, you're pretty much always set up for another jump, even if you land a sloppy trick.

**4) BIG AIR QUARTER-PIPES**

Don't move at all from the start position and you'll automatically get taken to a great set of quarter-pipes. Here you can get so much air you'll have enough time to pull off a McTwist + 360° flip!

**5) BIG GRIND QUARTER-PIPES**

Head 90° left from the start, down the ramp, following the short wall to the end. Go round to the other side. Land tricks to work up speed, then get to the end of a quarter-pipe. Combo grind along the lip all the way round for up to 40,000 points. But don't combo round a corner – you'll go straight off the lip.

**NY CITY – NEW YORK****1) THE WALL GRIND**

Right from the start you can boneless up on to the wall on the left, combo grind to the end, leap over the park entrance gap and continue combo grinding as far as possible along the rest of the wall. Make it round the corner without falling off and you can get more than 50,000 points for very little work.

**2) SUBWAY GRIND**

Follow the right-hand side of the road until you pass a tall square structure with big stripes on it. Do a U-turn and you'll find you can go up an escalator inside the structure and emerge at the subway station. Do another U-turn when you're at the top and you can jump on to and grind along the subway rails.

**3) SECRET SKATE PARK**

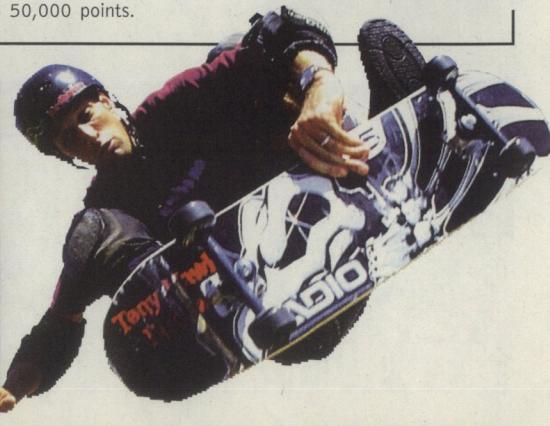
Jump off the end of the subway rails (see Subway Grind) and you'll find yourself in a secret skate park where you can grind along rails and park benches, pull big tricks off a long quarter-pipe and leap off the end of an unfinished road. Fantastic.

**4) THE WALL**

The best place for vert tricks in the level, the wall is found by taking the first left into the park. Follow the path to the statue courtyard. On the other side of the statue is the wall. Pulling 720° and even 900° is relatively easy with the air you can get, but watch out as there's no ramp to catch you on the other

**5) THE TWO TRANSFERS**

Turn round and enter the park using the right-hand entrance. Follow the path to the railing by the water. With enough speed you can jump off the end on to a shop counter. Carry on grinding and leap off again to land on a park bench. Keep grinding after these transfers for up to 50,000 points.



VENICE BEACH - CALIFORNIA

1) FIRST GRIND

Right in front of you, going from left to right, is a big railing that screams, "Grind on me!" So do just that. Combo grind along it as much as you can, then try to transfer up onto the roof, where you can continue your grind along the edge. Get it right and up to 25,000 points are yours. Get it wrong and you'll need plasters.



2) VERT ARENA

Go 90° left and down the steps brings you to a long, curved quarter-pipe that can act as a half-pipe for you to practise all your vert tricks. Be careful which way you face as you launch into a trick: if you go over the wall, you'll lose your points for that trick as well as your special bar, and end up back at the start.



3) QUARTER-PIPES

Head 90° right and follow the First Grind rail (see First Grind). Follow the left wall all the way round until you reach a set of three quarter-pipes. This is a great set-up: the two ramps facing each other can act as a half-pipe, and you can transfer to the third ramp for extra points.



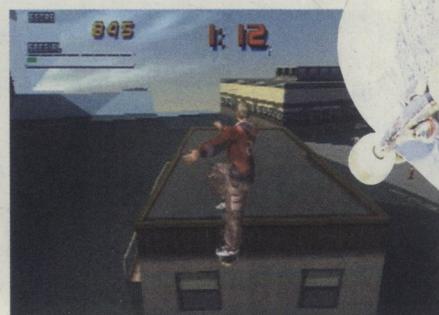
4) TABLE POP

Using the small, round benches scattered around the arena as ramps will give you that little bit of extra air to pull off more than just ordinary street tricks. Use them to add points to your total when travelling between the larger tricks.



5) LONG GRIND

The wall behind you at the start is good to grind along. You can transfer between the sections of wall and railing with no trouble, but watch out that you don't jump out of bounds at the end.



SKATESTREET - VENTURA

1) ETNIE'S WALL

Straight on from the start is Etnie's Wall, a huge ramp that catapults you into the air at high speed. 900°s are more than feasible here, and don't be surprised if you come second, or even top, the first time you use the wall.



2) THE CANAL PIPE

Round to the left of the start ramp and along the left-hand wall is a small vert ramp, made with two quarter-pipes. Again, 900°s are the norm here, with a perfect 900° Judo, Airwalk or Stiffy getting you 30,000. Combo grinding along the lip of the quarter-pipe also racks up the points.



3) THE BOWL

As soon as you leave the ramp, U-turn to the right and jump over the rail. You'll reach a large bowl where you can pull off some huge moves in quick succession. There's no need to worry about landing tricks perfectly straight, because wherever you go there's always going to be another ramp ahead of you.



4) HIGH STICKER

Exit the bowl (see The Bowl) using the left-hand ramp (the long side, which isn't as tall as the opposite long side). When you're out, follow the right-hand wall of the arena until you enter a huge half-pipe. Achieving the High Sticker bonus here can mean 40,000 points per trick!



5) HALF-PIPE TO HALF-PIPE

U-turn left from the bottom of the start ramp, and jump over the little ramp to reach a tall half-pipe. When you've had your fun with the vert tricks, try combo grinding along the lip of one side (away from the end wall), up and down the joining rail. Get this in one and you could be walking away with 40,000 points.



PHILADELPHIA - PENNSYLVANIA**1) THE HALF-PIPE**

Turn 90° left from the start and go straight on until you reach the road. When you're on it, follow it right until you get to the last (fourth) entrance on the left. Go in here and straight on to the end, where you'll find a half-pipe for you to hone your vert skills.

**2) THE ROB HILL GRIND**

If you pull this off, you'll get about 30,000 points and be worshipped by all. From the start, turn left 90° and go straight up to the low wall. Grind to the right, leap over the gap and continue grinding on the next wall. Leap over the next gap and land in another grind. Keep doing this, landing in grinds. It ain't easy.

**3) FOUNTAIN GRIND**

Once you've emptied the fountain, the inner edge can be used as a grind rail. Just jump on it and grind for as long as you can. Combo whenever you can, maintaining your balance, and you'll achieve high points for little effort. The fountain is straight on and down the steps from the start.

**4) WIRE GRIND**

Go over the ramp to the left of the starting point and follow the line of bins. Go up the ramp in front of you to a balcony. Go to the end, where you can turn around and get a run-up. Aim for the wire that runs to the centre of the park. This leads to the telephone poles that you can combo grind along.

**5) CURBAGE**

Because a road runs around the outside of the arena, there's also a curb for you to combo grind along. This can be done with ease, and there's no risk of plummeting from a great height if you fall off. Just watch out for that bus...

**THE BULLRING - MEXICO****1) THE HALF-PIPE**

From the start, you're thrown into the best half-pipe of the level. There's no need to leave it if you want a high score because you can pull off some big tricks right there. Don't go off the edge, though, and watch out for the loop-the-loop – this'll take you away from the action quicker than you can say, "Adios."

**2) WAY TO GO AMIGO**

Go up and off the opposite side of the half-pipe from the start. Leap up into the stands using the Edge Ramp (see Edge Ramp) and pick up speed on the first ramp. Then use the other ramp to get some air so you can grind along the top railings. If you land at the other side of the arena, you get up to 70,000 points!

**3) THE BULL PLANT**

Make your way outside the ring where all the bull pats are and into the stands. Grind clockwise round the inner lip at pace. When the bull passes under you, jump left and hold **A**. Time it right and you'll land on him, bounce off and get the points. If you're late, you'll miss. If you're early, you'll get trampled.

**4) WUSSY ROLLIN' GAP**

Roll down the start ramp into the half-pipe and pull a trick on the other side, land and set yourself up so you're on the lip next to the ramp. Pull the next trick at an angle so you can leap over the start ramp and land the other side of it, still on the lip. With a perfect 720° Judo it's worth 20,000 points.

**5) EDGE RAMP**

Stuck for somewhere to pull a vert trick? Round the edge of the bullring runs a small ramp that you can use as a quarter-pipe. It gives you enough air to pull off a series of moves in several turns, or a combo in one single jump. Use it to gain points while you're working out where to go for the big points.



GENERAL TIPS

STATISTICS

How much or how little you increase your stats will depend on individual style and the tricks you prefer to pull. They're pretty self-explanatory, but we'll run through them quickly...

Increasing the Ollie stat makes you jump higher when you press **X**. The Air stat means you can stay in the air longer when you launch off a ramp. Spin enables you to fit in more rotation when pulling tricks, and Landing means you'll fall off less often and perform better landings. Speed increases your speed (no, really). Balance makes it easier for you to stay on a lip or a rail while you're grinding. Switch means you have more skill and get more points for switch tricks. When you increase the Manual stat, you can stay in a manual or a nose manual longer.

For a skater who specialises in Vert, the stats to up first are Ollie, Air, Spin, Speed and Landing. This makes the tricks you pull when you launch off a ramp much easier to complete successfully. If your skater has a more Street flavour, try to spend your cash on Rail and Lip Balance, Switch, Hang Time and Manuals before anything

else. When these are as high as you want them, you can build up the other areas so that your skater eventually becomes a (ahem) lean, mean skating machine.

BOARDS

The more you spend on a board, the lighter, faster and stronger it will become. Also, the turning will become sharper, enabling quicker spins and manoeuvring. Generally, you don't need a new board to finish the game – just pick one you like the look of and off you go. However, if you find you've got a bit of spare cash burning a hole in your pockets, you might as well spend it on a nice shiny new deck.



SKATE PARK EDITOR

The Park Editor begins as a novelty option enabling you to create stupidly high ramps, pits of death and other comedy scenarios. However, as the game progresses and you find parts of some levels just too tricky to cope with, the editor becomes a valuable tool. Use it to recreate the part you're stuck on and you can practise with no pressure or time limit.

If you find a grind difficult, you can build rails that go up, rails that go down and rails that go round in circles. Select the longest and thinnest park size and fill it with rails running the length of it; add a quarter-pipe at each end so that you can keep up your speed.

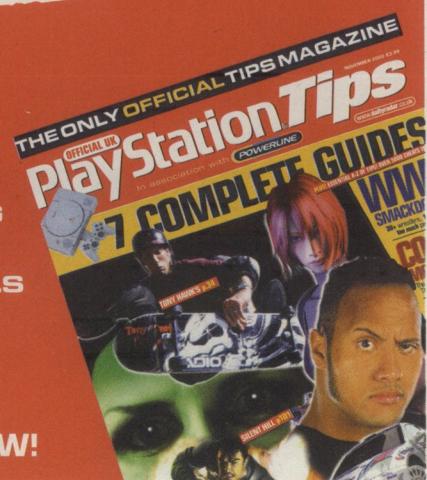
If, on the other hand, you don't seem to be able to jump far enough, and just fall short of your target, try building a launch ramp with several landing ramps differently spaced at the other end. This will give you a challenge as to how far you can jump and what tricks you can pull in each launch.

Another nice thing about the editor is that you can use it to build a racetrack with short cuts only you know about, and therefore thrash your mates. There's nothing more satisfying than appearing right in front of another skater just when he thinks he has you licked.

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NINTENDO
64

PC

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REVIEWS

YOUR DEFINITIVE
RUNDOWN OF
THE GAMES OUT
THIS MONTH.
GIVEN THE ONCE
OVER BY OPM



p106: Medal Of Honour Underground



p112: Incredible Crisis



p114: Spyro Year Of The Dragon



p120: Champions League 2000/2001



p110: This Is Football 2

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THIS MONTH'S REVIEWERS

OPM'S GAMING JURY IS SWORN IN. PREPARING TO DISPENSE BARGAIN BIN JUSTICE TO TAT THIS MONTH ARE...



MARK DONALD

Fave Game This Month:
ISS Pro Evolution
You wouldn't believe it to look at him, but he's important now. We're not sure how.



DAN MAYERS

Fave Game This Month:
Tomb Raider Chronicles
Renowned as a sensuous lover, Dan is also 19-years-old, very strong and fighting fit.



CATHERINE CHANNON

Fave Game This Month:
Spyro 3
Cat finally learned to dance, but now insists on taking the *Jungle Book* mat to nightclubs



LEE HALL

Fave Game This Month:
Tony Hawk's 2
He's OK for a couple of hours, then he becomes so irritating he even annoys himself



RICHARD KEITH

Fave Game This Month:
Midnight Club
Joined a *Midnight Club* once, but soon realised that was just a trick to make him work late



NICK ELLIS

Fave Game This Month:
Tomb Raider Chronicles
He once confessed to supporting Plymouth Argyle. No one has spoken to him since

PLUS!

OPM RATING

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| 10 | The rarely-awarded golden '10'. Bestowed on games that are perfect |
| 9 | A superb piece of software - recommended without prejudice |
| 8 | Very, very good. Add it to your collection yesterday, if not sooner |
| 7 | A great title with a few minor irritations. Still worth a purchase |
| 6 | A case of 'Why did they do that?' Very playable but with some dodgy bits |
| 5 | Straight average. Unoriginal or flawed, but still worth buying - only just mind |
| 4 | Below average. Probably has some serious gameplay or lifespan flaws |
| 3 | Looking pretty bad now. Maybe worth renting for a day or so |
| 2 | Crap, to put it bluntly. Technically inept, poorly structured and short-lived |
| 1 | A product without merit of any sort. Naff beyond human endurance. Avoid |

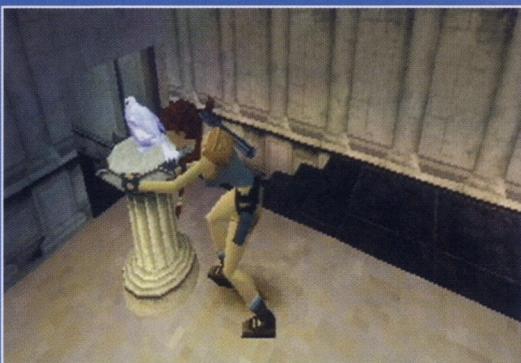


p122: Digimon World



p130: Prince Naseem Boxing

GAME OF THE MONTH



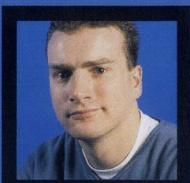
Tomb Raider Chronicles 102

"*TRC* is far from the hastily slapped together rush job we were expecting"

WIN THIS!
Turn to page 145
NOW!

Andy
LOWE

Fave Game This Month:
MOH Underground
Spent the month shooting at Germans - pity he wasn't playing footie for England

Jonathan
DAVIES

Fave Game This Month:
Jungle Book Groove
Just look at him. Cool, sophisticated and handsome. At least, so he keeps telling us

Paul
ROSE

Fave Game This Month:
MOH Underground
Flower-scented Paul smells just as sweet, no matter what you call him. Beautiful

PETE
WILTON

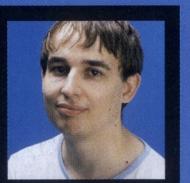
Fave Game This Month:
Spyro 3
Pete got so caught up with *Spyro 3* he keeps trying to make toast by breathing on bread

STEVE
MERRETT

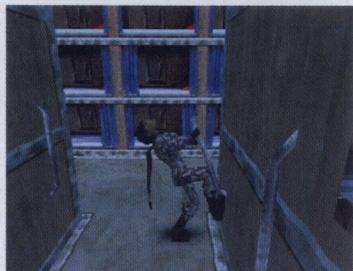
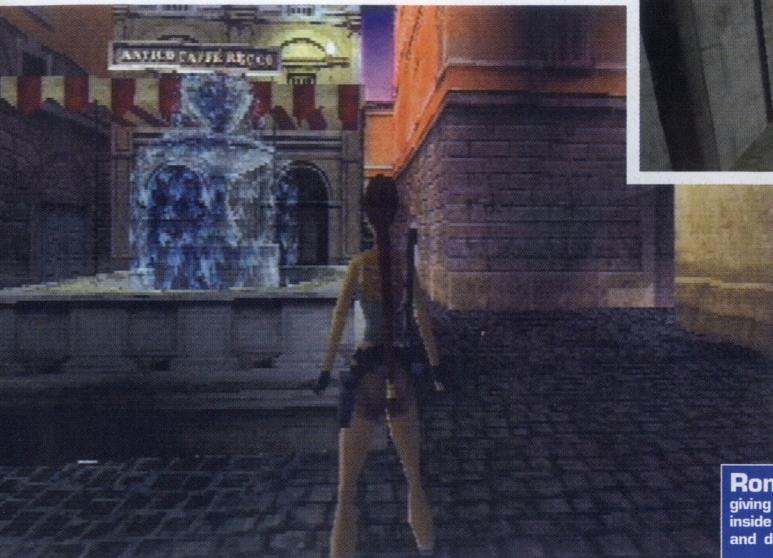
Fave Game This Month:
UEFA 2000/2001
Not only a games reviewer but a gentleman, a scholar and an acrobat.

ALEX
BICKHAM

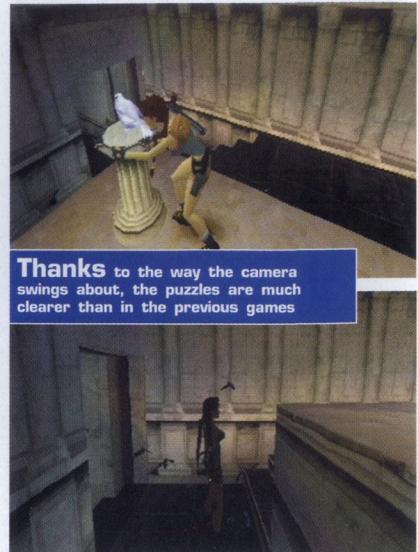
Fave Game This Month:
Incredible Crisis
Mild-mannered Al looks more like a figure from *Guess Who?* everyday. Scary

STE
CURRAN

Fave Game This Month:
MOH Underground
Once lived in Liverpool, but moved when Scallies stole half his first name. Boss, mate



Rome's lovingly drawn: the cobbled piazzas giving way to intricate carvings on the temple. The inside of the German sub, however, is dank, dark and dirty. And probably smells too...



Thanks to the way the camera swings about, the puzzles are much clearer than in the previous games

POSH BIRD STRIKES AGAIN. LARA'S SWANSONG ON PLAYSTATION IS A TRIUMPH



Tomb Raider Chronicles

“A suspense-laden stealth ‘em up, a head-pounding puzzler and

FACTFILE



PUBLISHER	Eidos
DEVELOPER	Core Design
RELEASE DATE	November
AGE RESTRICTION	11 and over
NUMBER OF PLAYERS	One

Forget that bit in the first *Tomb Raider* where our fresh-faced heroine slides down the side of a gigantic Sphinx and begins trotting across the cavern floor? The camera suddenly zoomed right back into the ceiling, leaving little Lara a tiny figure in the sand, completely dwarfed by her surroundings and simultaneously leaving gamers awestruck by the sheer scale of the game. This was obviously the start of something very special.

Five years later, the girl with the guns is a cultural phenomenon. She's appeared on the cover of style mags (*The Face*) and featured in ads for fizzy drinks (Lucozade). Grown men even claim to have fallen in love with her (stand up barmy Niels Berndts of Holland, as featured in OPM63). Alongside the hedgehog and the fat plumber, she is one of the most recognisable characters in videogame history. But in the last game, Core Design – presumably sick of the sight of staring at her lithe limbs for the past five years – appeared to kill her off. She was last seen

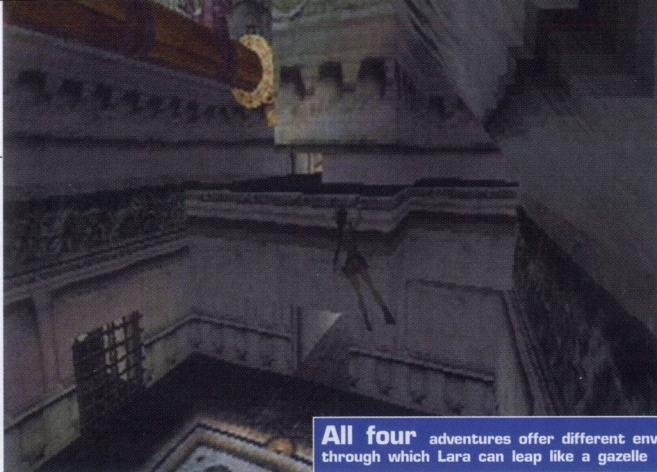
buried under a bloody great big pile of pyramidal rubble, which rather begs the question, what are we doing with another game? Surely this is a blatant cash-in; Core milking Lara's dusty corpse for every groat they can scrape. This, however, is not the case. Not by a long way. *Tomb Raider Chronicles* is far from the hastily slapped together rush job we were expecting. Despite the dodgy premise, it's actually incredibly well put together, concentrating on the gameplay elements that made the *Tomb Raider* series great.

TRC opens with Lara's friends and family gathered in the pouring rain round a suitably extravagant statue of our intrepid archaeologist, mourning the apparent loss of one so young yet so very, very fit. Trusty butler Winston, Gaelic man of the cloth Father Patrick, and french fancy Jean Yves return to Croft Mansions after the memorial service and, over a snifter of whiskey or two, begin to reminisce over the scrapes that Lara got into between the last four epic adventures. While it sounds like a shaky plot device for a game, it works

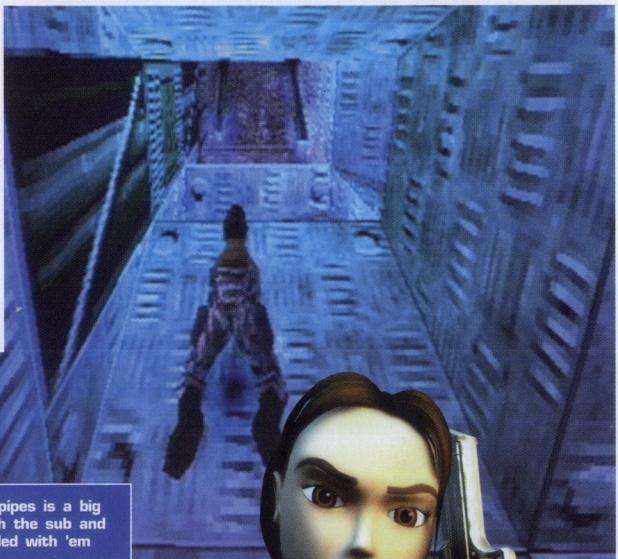
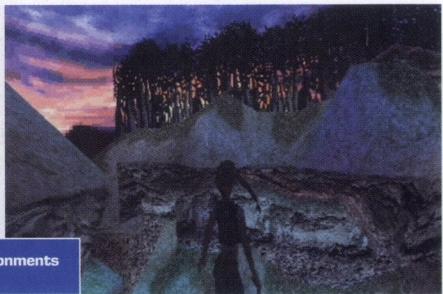
very well. *Chronicles* is split into four separate and distinct mini-adventures linked only by Lara, and not by an epic quest for a collection of ancient artefacts. This has allowed Core to expand Lara's world sideways, in as much as we get to find out a little bit more about her life outside archaeology, and it also allows for a much greater depth of gameplay. *TRC* does feature a traditional *Tomb Raider* adventure – with Lara barrelling round Rome – but it also breaks up into a suspense-laden stealth 'em up, a head-pounding puzzler and an all-action thriller. Brilliant.

The first quarter of the game begins behind the opera house in Rome (remember, the one from *TR2*) with Lara on a hunt for the Philosopher's Stone. Inept bad guys Larsen and Pierre are chasing her cute little derrière round a temple as she searches for the keys to unlock the way through to the next level. So far, so very *Tomb Raider* – except the puzzles are a little more accessible and the lovingly textured back alleys of this game make the Rome of *TR2* look like

Tomb Raider Chronicles



All four adventures offer different environments through which Lara can leap like a gazelle



Crawling through pipes is a big part of the game - both the sub and Von Croy's HQ are riddled with 'em



an all-action thriller

the backstreets of Delhi. Which is good. But the crucial factor that tightens up the gameplay – and this applies to all four adventures in *TRC* – is the way the levels have been designed this time. Core is the first to acknowledge the marked difference between *TR2* and *3*, at the root of which are the ever-expanding levels. *TR3* contained levels you could, and quite frequently did, get completely lost in. Core went down that route because people were crying out for bigger adventures, but in most cases sprawling levels are disastrous because it makes game direction very difficult to control. By returning to the (relatively) compact levels of the early games, *TRC* keeps you riveted to the adventure – solve puzzle, crack code, move on to the next one, all guns blazing.

It's in the second adventure that you get a sense of just how creative the level designers have been. Lara dons Arctic camouflage gear and infiltrates an abandoned German U-Boat, housing the mythical Spear Of Destiny that Hitler was supposedly trying to get his hands on in

World War 2. The puzzles that lead to the sub may be classic *Tomb Raider*, but the penalties of failure reveal a sick twist.

The opening area is a cargo bay containing a guy who controls a huge crane that's sweeping across the ceiling, picking up crates. The first time you walk in the room you'll wander about for a few seconds before hearing a whirring noise. Automatically you'll stop dead (whirring noises in *Tomb Raider* are bad), which is completely the wrong thing to do. The guy in the crane has spotted you and dropped his steel talons down on your pig-tailed bonce. Hello, instant death. Once inside the confines of the sub, the camera angles generate a nasty, claustrophobic atmosphere with Lara stalking round, dodging sparking electrical cables, never knowing quite what's around the next corner. Reminiscent of any submarine movie, the level balances perfectly the thought ►



HOW TO...

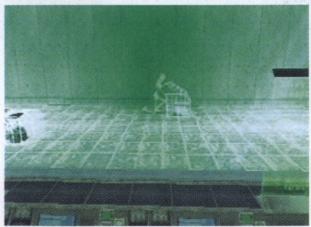
GET LARA NAKED. YES, REALLY.



Yes, it's true, you can actually see through Lara's costume in *Tomb Raider Chronicles*. What began as a joke by one of the original creators of the game resulted in any number of rumours that a certain combination of buttons would part Lara from her hotpants. Rumours flatly denied by Core.



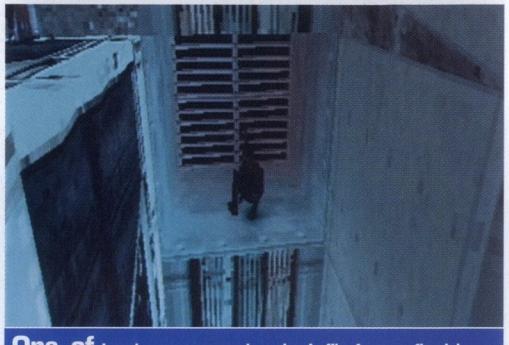
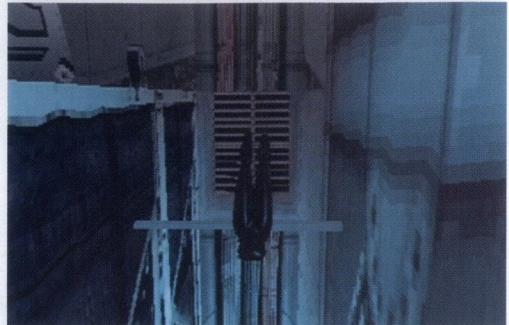
Now with the help of the X-Ray machine in Von Croy's super hi-tech high-rise headquarters you can see right through her top! And her skin! In fact you can see right down to the very bone. Nice femur...



Since Lara can't take her Heckler & Koch sniper rifle through the alarm system, Zip, her trusty techno henchman, tells her to dump the rifle and go in bareback. And lo, there she is in all her skeletal glory. By the way, try checking the second box in for a handy medipack which'll come in very useful later. Enjoy.



Little Lara's trip to craggy Ireland shows off her youthful limbs and buncles but, since she's a nipper, she's got no guns. Time to engage brain



One of Lara's new moves is a back flip from a fixed bar. Do a running jump and hit **X** to see Lara leap for the bar, flip over the top, then somersault to the other side.



“Lara can do a load of actions beyond the call of duty: sliding

► and action that's at the heart of the Tomb Raider series.

By the third adventure, it's time for Father Patrick to take up the story and we flash back to an inquisitive teenage Lara, stowed away with the good priest on a jaunt to Ireland to solve a mysterious haunting. Since Lara's so young, she has no weapons and must rely on brain power to get through the level. It's a nice idea, but of all the levels, this is the weakest. Setting the adventure at night doesn't help matters. In a level that revolves around making precision jumps and dodging little creatures (Core claims they are imps but they look suspiciously like a remodelling of the baboons in TR3) the absence of much light makes life trickier than it should be. It's also the only level where the in-game cut-scenes and camera views

don't work as well as they could, again because of the darkness. You'll find Lara stuck in an old chapel, where the camera skips around the rafters following her. Unfortunately, the skeleton that's chasing you with a sword is oblivious to your fumbling with the view. A shame because the idea of a purely puzzle-based Lara adventure could have worked very well.

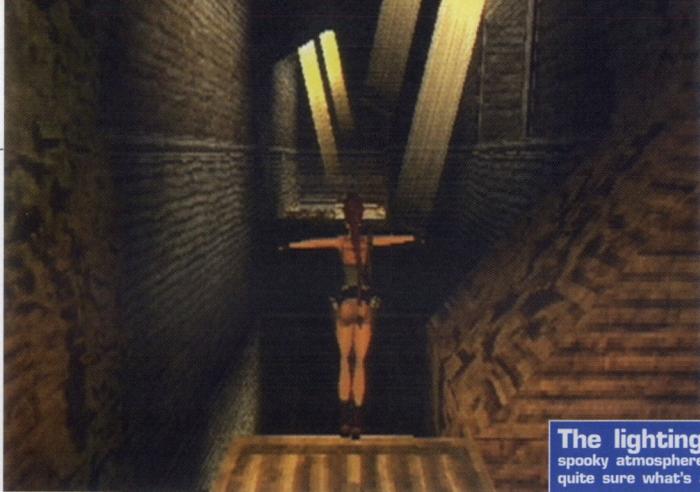
Finally, we arrive at undoubtedly the best level in the game, and probably one of the best Tomb Raider levels ever. Lara does the Matrix by way of *Mission: Impossible* with a hefty dose of Metal Gear thrown in. Alongside helping-hand Zip, her mission (should she choose to accept it) is to break into Von Croy's head quarters and steal the artefact known as the Iris. Having blasted past a couple of plasma-wielding guards, Lara discovers the place is stacked up to the rafters with alarm systems. Time to dump the gunnery then. Fortunately she's something of a part-time chemist and, after finding a couple of jars of chloroform and bits of cloth, sets about

knocking out the laser-wielding guardsmen. Despite being a relatively small level, there's a touch of genius in the way the gameplay guides the player through the building. Partly this works – and this is the case across the whole game – through the clever use of in-game cut-scenes. Lara appears to be able to do a whole load of actions above and beyond the call of duty: sliding into bad guys, leaping out of the way of laser lunges. These are actually mini cut-scenes that blend so seamlessly into the action you still feel like you're in control. And the lighting effect on that cat suit is something to behold...

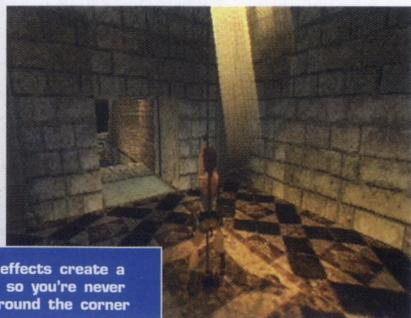
The standard Croft improvements crop up in *TRC*, with a couple of new moves such as the superbly animated tightrope walk and the parallel bar swing, but Core has also managed to graft a scary edge on to the action. On numerous occasions during the game, set-pieces occur that you just never expect – the crane in the sub dock is one, as is the sudden explosion down the vents of Von Croy's building. It adds a real level of suspense

A screenshot from the video game Resident Evil 3: Nemesis. It shows Lara Croft, the protagonist, standing in a library filled with tall bookshelves. She is wearing a green tank top and black pants, with a black belt and gloves. She is looking down at a large stack of books on a low shelf. The lighting is dramatic, with strong shadows and highlights on her face and the books.

Tomb Raider Chronicles



The lighting effects create a spooky atmosphere, so you're never quite sure what's around the corner

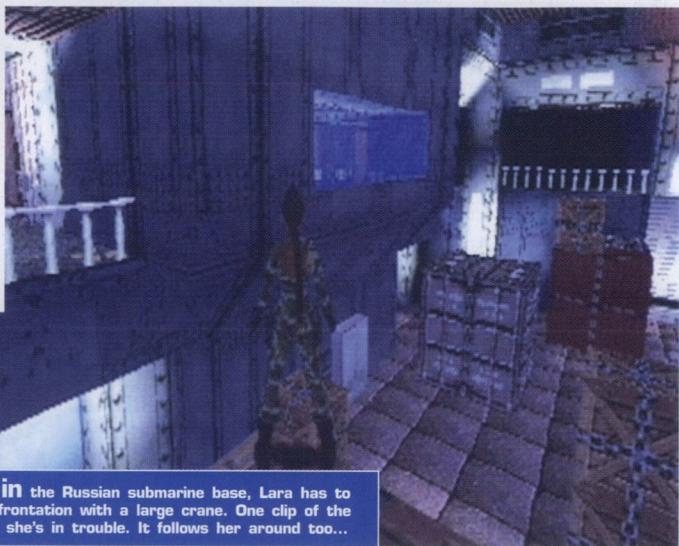
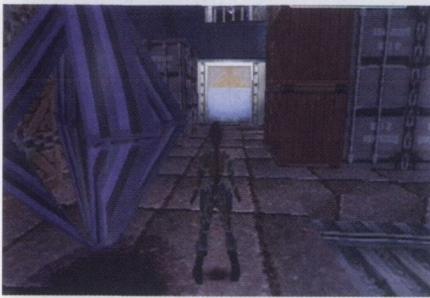


HOW TO...

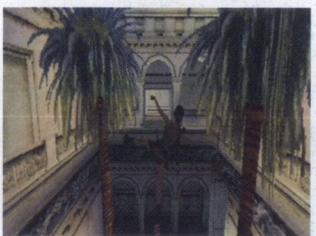
BE A BIRD ON THE WIRE



One of the new moves in *Chronicles* is the tightrope walk, which could have looked very dodgy, like Tony Hawk does when he's grinding. Fortunately, the animation is incredible. Lara gracefully steps out on to the wire and delicately moves into space.



Deep in the Russian submarine base, Lara has to avoid confrontation with a large crane. One clip of the talon and she's in trouble. It follows her around too...



Once she's on the wire you can simply hold forward and she'll shuffle along. Obviously, like real tightrope walking, it can't be that simple and every now and again Lara's hips will swing to one side and she'll begin to wobble like a weebie.



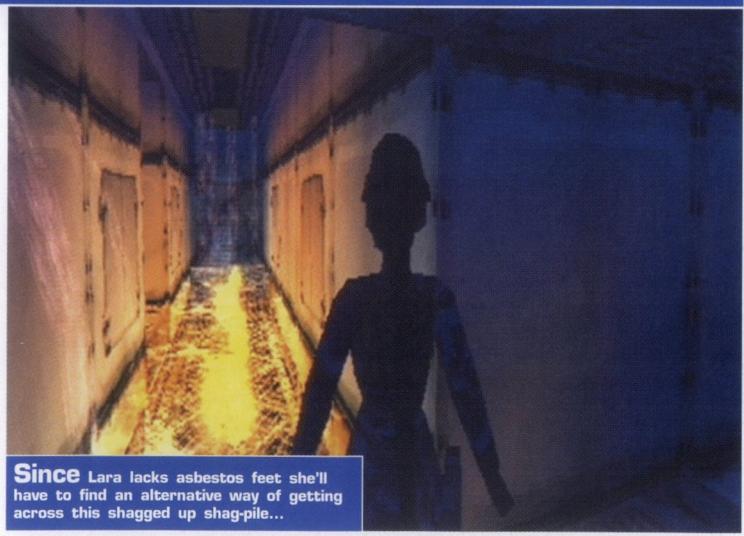
into bad guys, leaping away from laser lunges "

to the game and that impresses on you the fact that this may be *Tomb Raider* V but we haven't seen it all yet.

Over the years, there's no doubt the *Tomb Raider* games have fluctuated in quality. Partly that's because the brilliant moments in previous instalments were spread too thinly over sprawling games. *Chronicles* is a hit because it ditches the rambling levels and concentrates and enhances all the elements that worked into one stunning final episode.

Anyway, back to this Croft-meets-the-Grim Reaper issue. Surely they can't really have killed her off, can they? Isn't she supposed to be appearing on PS2? For the answer to that question, you'll have to play the game. And you really do have to play this game. ■

Dan Mayers



Since Lara lacks asbestos feet she'll have to find an alternative way of getting across this shagged up shag-pile...

OFFICIAL UK
PlayStation
Magazine

VERDICT

GRAPHICS

The pinnacle of PlayStation texturing. Sigh **10**

GAMEPLAY

Masterfully paced and much tighter than the last two adventures **10**

LIFESPAN

The secrets make it worth playing a couple of times. As usual... **9**

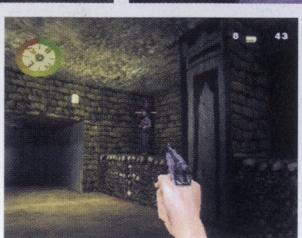
OVERALL

Chronicles is the epitome of just how good an adventure can be. Next-gen Lara's reputed to be something 'different'. As long as Core maintains these high standards, she'll be in good hands

10
OUT OF 10



Run away! See how unarmed men scatter when you start firing bullets at them. Bunch of cowards



WE HAFF VAYS OF MAKING AN INSPIRED PREQUEL...



Medal Of Honour Underground

“ Its key triumph is that the attention to gameplay variety is set

FACTFILE



PUBLISHER	EA
DEVELOPER	Dreamworks Interactive
RELEASE DATE	December
AGE RESTRICTION	15 and over
NUMBER OF PLAYERS	One to two

The original *Medal Of Honour* (now wearing a Platinum hat) was a concept pitched by a Mr Spielberg during the making of the overrated *Saving Private Ryan*. The idea: rookie conscript to the allies' covert Office Of Strategic Services indulges in a little first-person espionage and Nazi-exterminating. Unlike Steven's film, the game was a rich soup of authentic period detail, brutal action and brain-flexing puzzle subplots (*OPM54 9/10*). Recently, only *Alien Resurrection* has threatened to overshadow MOH's claim to King Of Intelligent PS Shooters; but now there's *Medal Of Honour Underground*, with moments that will make even PC owners bawl with envy.

This time, you play Manon – a younger version of the whispering woman who oversaw the missions in the original. As it's a prequel, you must advance Manon from an eager young French Resistance firebrand to a lethal OSS super-agent. The set-up is the same: a neatly animated menu screen depicts

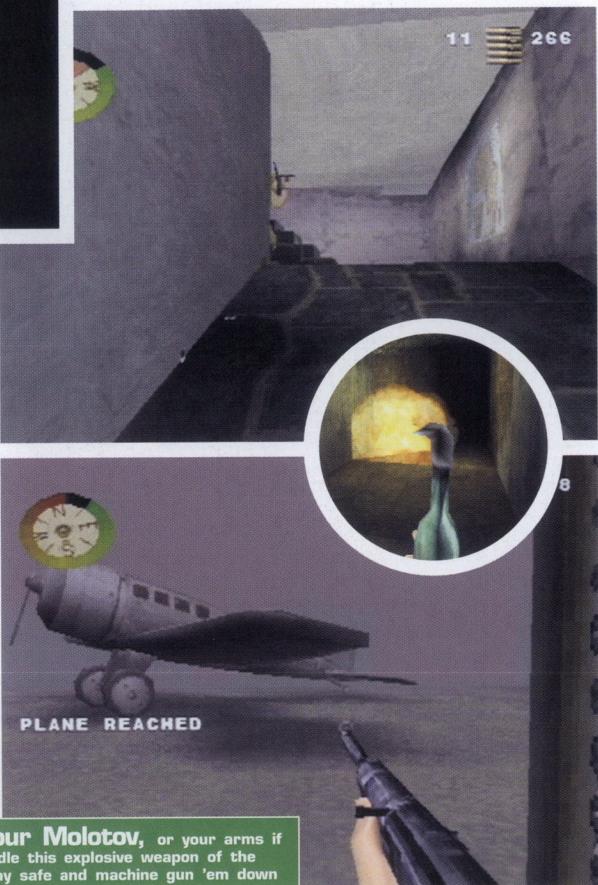
Manon's secret operations base in the cellar of some French bakery. Missions are unlocked in sub-chunks of three or four, bookended by those curiously fascinating WW2 history-lesson movies. It all starts basically enough, with an orientation stroll in which Manon has to follow her brother's lead as he scurries around trying to collect explosives, but the challenges soon flow thicker, faster and, in some cases, joypad-flingingly harder. There's plenty of globe-hopping: France, Morocco, Germany, Greece... all leading to the final push in Paris, with the aim of flushing Fritz out of France for good.

It's a case of studied enhancement rather than radical overhaul. *Medal Of Honour* fans hungry for more will be perfectly happy; virgins will barely notice the difference. First up, the weapons are more varied, satisfying and, crucially, useful. The German sniper rifle is loud and rangey, the pistol crossbow silent and lethal. There's an ear-splitting array of rifles, chugging automatics and – ideal for achieving that pretty fireworks-display effect of tumbling, "Himmel!"-shrieking

Nazi scum – petrol bombs, grenades and even a rudimentary rocket-launcher. Best of all, the balance has been polished to perfection. Gone is the much bemoaned business of salivating over your start-up arsenal and then simply sailing through the level sticking to one or two guns. Now the missions seem carefully geared to variety: take out the guys in the gun towers with the sniper rifle, disable the anti-aircraft guns with a grenade or two, mow down a crowd of bellowing Jerries with an automatic, take out tanks and motorcycles with the rocket-launcher.

Yes, tanks. And motorcycles. As early as mission three, Manon is faced with the prospect of a wily creep around a Panzer-infested city, despatching the armoured hulks with explosive while drawing fire from attendant SS commanders and, ideally, keeping her distance from one-hit kill shells. Another mission, set on the fringes of an occupied town, requires a scuttle to a safe-house, down back-roads buzzing with deadly bikers and their hard-gunning sidecar riders. Dive out of the way fast, or become pavement pizza.

Medal Of Honour Underground



HOW TO... GO UNDERCOVER

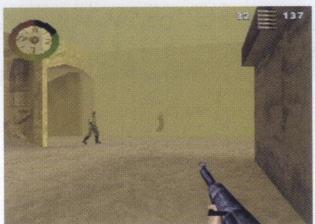
The Lighting The Torch mission is your first chance at a spot of sneaky espionage. But first you have to get to your disguise...



Use the silencer pistol to take out the patrolling soldiers around the crate area. Many of them are hanging around on their own, but a few stick together. If you arouse attention, pull out your automatic and mop up.



Enter the hut and nab the shipping records. Look out for the commander lurking just inside and to the left - he's a sharpshooter.



With the main doors now open, two guards will come storming through. Use the hut for cover and finish them off.



At the courtyard, cross over and climb the ladder to the room with the disguise and camera. Trap the real photographer in the shower by pushing the chair against the door. Now take the disguise and get busy snapping/cap-popping.

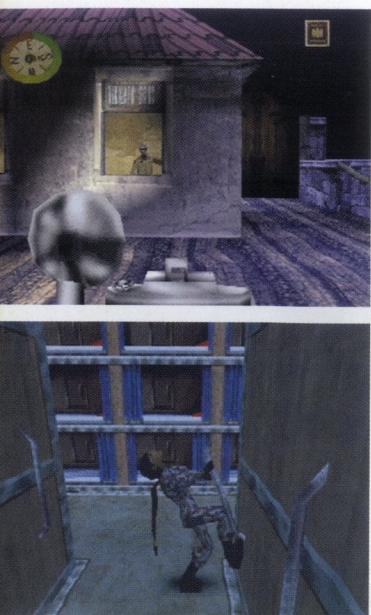
in such a supremely convincing atmosphere

Strike with a well-aimed rocket or machine-gun burst and watch the light show as the bike smashes into a tree.

The big, orange explosions are carefully tempered with plenty of stealthy exploring, switch-flicking, document-swiping and, most joyously, a spot of photography. The Morocco missions transform Manon into an undercover 'propaganda photographer' and it's up to you how to use the new insider identity to tackle the mission. Choice one: sneak around, flashing your official snapper 'papers' to any nosey grunts and checking off objectives when their backs are turned. Choice two: blind the enemy with a camera-flash and waste him as he rubs his eyes. Choice three: get an isolated guard to smile for the camera, then quickly swap flash-bulb for silenced pistol and take him down, mid 'Cheese'.

The key triumph of *Medal Of Honour Underground* is that all of this fabulous attention to gameplay variety is set in such a supremely convincing atmosphere. If you can excuse the usual glitchiness that comes with this kind of ambition, ▶





Grenades on film.
One of the triumphs of the first game returns: the spy camera that elicited silly poses from those crazy Nazis



“Firefights can seem frighteningly realistic”

graphics are stylised and evocative, particularly the creepy character models and propaganda loading-screens. The sound is wonderful: a high-end, classical score; crunching gunfire and bullet-contacts; amusing *'Allo 'Allo accents; eerie background barks of alert. With a clearly enhanced enemy AI, firefights can seem frighteningly realistic. You'll need to be solid in mixing firepower with strategy: lurking around a corner, and waiting for the predictable rush of cannon-fodder rarely works, and neither will a bold, gunfire-spraying rush into a group of lurking guards. Crouching, dodging and taking cover is vital, with just one gripe: occasionally, the bad guys seem to be able to shoot through walls.*

But the subtle touches of brilliance far outweigh any moans about smudgy textures or imprecise targeting... The way

soldiers under fire dash for cover or a mounted machine-gun; the wonderful mess that results from winging an enemy as he's about to lob a grenade; an open-ended feel which encourages secret-hunting and creative problem-solving.

And the final bonus: a Two-Player Mode, which... isn't bad. It's a straight deathmatch in well-crafted locations with the usual customisation options (number of kills, time limit). All the big guns are provided, which can lead to some spectacular slapstick, but it feels forced.

First and foremost, this is an authentic, involving, one-player experience. A bit more than a mission-pack, a bit less than a sequel revamp. In film terms, a dark and dingy thriller with rugged heroes, dastardly villains and some magnificent action set-pieces. ■

Andy Lowe

**IF YOU LIKE THIS
THEN LOOK AT...**
ALIEN RESURRECTION (OPM62 8/10)
Similar, dark and gloomy first-person shooter
stylings. With monsters instead of Germans

OFFICIAL UK
PlayStation
Magazine

VERDICT

■ GRAPHICS

Smeary textures, but incredible attention to period detail 9

■ GAMEPLAY

A blend of frantic, first-person shooty action and moody stealth 9

■ LIFESPAN

It's big with secrets aplenty and lots of replay value 9

■ OVERALL

Not a huge leap forward from the original, but easily as much fun, with all the enhancements in the right place. If you already own *Medal Of Honour*, get this. If you don't, be greedy and get both

9

OUT OF 10

HOW TO...

DESTROY THE TANKS

On the Tread Carefully mission, Manon gets her first crack at a worryingly one-sided face-off with the relentless German Panzers. Here's how to live out that *Saving Private Ryan* fantasy...



Immediately head forward and to the right. Get behind the mounted machine-gun and get some damage in on the first tank as it retreats round the corner. Mop up the two soldiers and quickly finish off the tank when it reappears.



Carry on to the next machine-gun and edge forward to draw in the tank. Dash back to the gun, mow down the soldiers and waste the tank as it trundles into view.



At the bottom of the stairs, lob up a petrol bomb to deal with the soldiers and use your Panzerfaust rocket-launcher to pick off the two tanks by lurking at the top of the stairs and taking pot-shots. Be careful to retreat occasionally to avoid the shells.

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REVIEW



SCEE WARMS UP ITS FREE-SCORING PREMIERSHIP CONTENDER...



This Is Football 2

“It’s in the midfield battles that limitations become apparent”

FACTFILE



PUBLISHER	SCEE
DEVELOPER	In-house
RELEASE DATE	Out now
AGE RESTRICTION	None
NUMBER OF PLAYERS	One to four

With a name like *This Is Football 2*, SCEE's kickabout sets itself up for all manner of lame gags. Thankfully, the game is strong enough to avoid such barbs, but nevertheless still lags behind the best football titles PlayStation has to offer.

With the original game (OPM53 7/10) criticised for its lack of scoring opportunities, *This Is Football 2* is a much more open and attack-minded game. Scoring opportunities are now more common and easily taken, but the all-important build-up play remains as enjoyable as ever.

However, it is during the numerous midfield battles that many of *TIF2*'s limitations also become apparent, most notably when the action bunches up for the umpteenth time. Although the game

is capable of great moments of pace, with wingers whipping in crosses and a shooting system that allows for some real crackers, too much of your time is spent tussling in the centre of the pitch, reducing matches to scrappy affairs.

This is a great pity, because when *This Is Football 2*'s elements start to gel, it shows real promise. Visually, it borders between solid and impressive, with the big, bold players looking and moving well – while additional actions, such as the way they wheel away to celebrate a goal, deserve to be filed under 'Nice Touches'. The camera work is also impeccable, with nods to *Match Of The Day* and Sky's *Super Sunday* in its choice of pans and cutaways.

Ultimately, though, a football game is judged on its combination of these many factors and the speed and fluidity of its

gameplay. Maybe we have all been spoilt by the free-flowing antics of *ISS Pro Evolution* and *UEFA Champions League* with their many tricks and flicks (and, more importantly, their intelligent player AI) because despite its best intentions, *TIF2* cannot compete.

It's not that the game does anything particularly badly, but it just fails to shine in any area. While it deserves credit for the inclusion of First Division teams, a responsive player-switching system and rectifying the scoring problems of the first game, *This Is Football 2* is still no more than adequate. It lacks the depth of *ISS Pro Evolution*, the immediacy of *Champions League* and the gloss of *FIFA*. Much as it pains OPM to use the game's name against it, perhaps This Is Too Little, Too Late is a more suitable moniker. ■

Steve Merrett

OFFICIAL UK
PlayStation
Magazine

VERDICT

■ GRAPHICS	Large, detailed sprites – apart from the odd deformed player	7
■ GAMEPLAY	Simple, undemanding but engaging	6
■ LIFESPAN	Lacks the speed and immediacy of its rivals	6

■ OVERALL
A good all-rounder, but lacks ambition. *TIF2* holds its own but is neither fast nor skilled enough to offer serious competition to the likes of *ISS*, leaving it languishing mid-table in the PlayStation Premiership

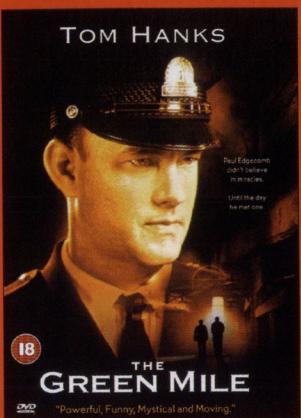
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OUT OF 10

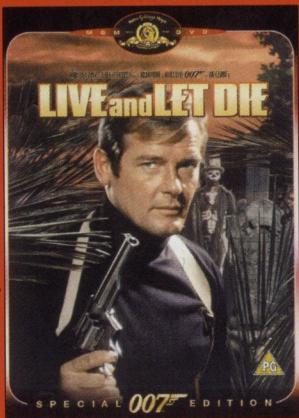
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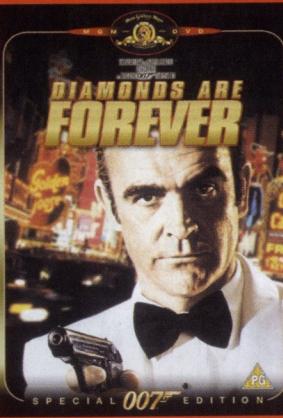
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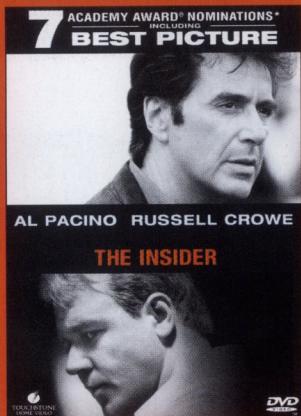
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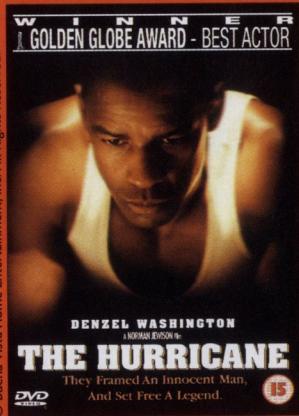
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REVIEW



The Bank Heist and the Golden Pig: two of *Crisis'* most original and well-executed mini-games



IT'S BLOCKBUSTERS-MEETS-BISHI BASHI, THINK BOB HOLNESS IN A KIMONO, OK DON'T



Incredible Crisis

“ Its unusual subject matter and unique style work in its favour ”

FACTFILE

PUBLISHER	Titus
DEVELOPER	Polygon Magic
RELEASE DATE	November
AGE RESTRICTION	None
NUMBER OF PLAYERS	One

IF YOU LIKE THIS
THEN LOOK AT...
BOMBERMAN
The ultimate party game. Hilarious and
bonkers in equal measure (OPM58 8/10)

This is a bit of a weird one. In parts, *Incredible Crisis* is ingenious and innovative, while in others it's staid and repetitive. On playing the game, you'll experience an overwhelming sense of achievement coupled with an urge to throw the CD, your joypad and your PlayStation out of a very high window. As you can imagine, this mixed bag of gaming emotions makes *Incredible Crisis* rather hard to judge.

Essentially, it's a collection of 'crazy' mini-games following the story of a Japanese family whose lives are plagued with mishap and misfortune. You play the part of different family members, and as each of them encounters a crisis, you jump between FMV and mini-game.

It's an eclectic selection of scenarios. One minute you're running away from a

giant preying mantis in a button-bashing frenzy, the next you're trying to solve mathematical puzzles that would even frighten Mensa members. It's an all-in test of gaming ability, general knowledge, reaction times, calculus skills and, at times, your patience.

Incredible Crisis' learning curve is as bizarre as its subject matter. Actually, it's more of a learning wave: the games don't seem to get progressively harder, but follow their own fluctuating difficulty patterns – sometimes hard, sometimes easy. This isn't necessarily a bad thing. It could be argued that it's only because we're used to the final level of a game being the hardest that something seems wrong here. But it is frustrating to get stuck only 20 minutes into the proceedings, and stay that way for hours. Conversely, once you get past this early

hitch, it's easy enough to race through the other problems. So if you can cope with the frustration, you're likely to complete *Incredible Crisis* quite quickly. You'll also feel short-changed because some of the games are repeated a number of times, only using different characters. That's just lazy game design and a poor return when you've shelled out hard-earned cash.

Incredible Crisis' novelty value, unusual subject matter and unique style all work in its favour. Some of these elements, such as the general knowledge bits and the puzzles have been missing on the PlayStation until now, and they're presented with a nicely surreal sense of humour. In places, this is a fine game, but in others it's quite poor. With more time, effort and thought, *Incredible Crisis* could have been an incredible achievement. ■

Catherine Channon

OFFICIAL UK
PlayStation
Magazine

VERDICT

■ GRAPHICS

As good as they need to be 7

■ GAMEPLAY

There's a love-hate thing going on 6

■ LIFESPAN

If you know Japanese currency, it'll be over too quickly 6

■ OVERALL

Incredible Crisis has the makings of a much better game than it is. Its originality, gameplay and attention to detail are drastically let down by the repetition of games

6

OUT OF 10



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Fire up Spyro and, as ever, he's happy to toast warthogs and other enemies. Sheila the kangaroo, meanwhile, has a pretty devastating kick attack for taking care of the odd unruly moose



On reflection this is clearly the best-looking platformer to appear on PS1. These ice-clad levels show off its amazing effects



CRISP 3D, PERFECT REFLECTIONS, TECHNICOLOUR EXPLOSIONS, IS THIS ON PS2?



Spyro

Year Of The Dragon

“It feels different to earlier incarnations, with four co-stars to

FACTFILE



PUBLISHER	SCEE
DEVELOPER	Insomniac Games
RELEASE DATE	November
AGE RESTRICTION	None
NUMBER OF PLAYERS	One to two

Get your hankies ready because *Spyro Year Of The Dragon* is the little lizard's PlayStation swansong. It's only three years since Spyro first unfurled his wings and gave all those wannabe 3D platformers a royal roasting, but it seems like a lifetime ago. These days, 3D comes as standard and his work here is done... Well, almost.

Don't blub yet because *Spyro 3* is not just the best *Spyro* game; it's the best platformer on PlayStation. Brave words, perhaps, but we challenge anyone to suggest a leap 'em up that can better it. With near-perfect 3D environments, finely tuned flying and hopping, beautifully animated characters and spot-on voice acting, nothing else comes close.

You might be saying to yourself, it's just *Spyro 2* again, isn't it? Well, while there's obviously a lot that'll seem familiar – what with the return of Sparx, Hunter and

Moneybags – Insomniac has ensured *Spyro 3* looks and feels different to earlier incarnations, with four co-stars to control and a hefty bucket of mini-games.

Barely have you got started before Hunter gives you the chance to go skateboarding around a converted gladiatorial arena, flaming and butting troublesome reptiles. Later on you'll command a speedboat, clamber in a tank and go skating and swimming (the little fella's jump-and-dive move looks especially cool). And this is only

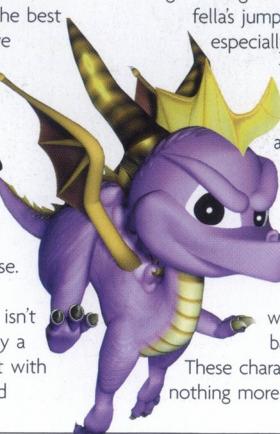
the stuff Spyro does; the other characters have their own adventures too. Sheila the kangaroo stomps a fort into the ground, and Sgt Byrd flaps about transporting heavy weights on to pressure switches while unleashing a barrage of rockets.

These characters could have been nothing more than Spyro in drag, but

brilliant characterisation and unique abilities (Sheila's super-leap, Byrd's powered flight) makes taking on their guises a refreshing change.

Something that stands out by not standing out at all is the way the main levels and all the various mini-games and sub-missions fit together. The intro sequence is short, and every so often a cut-scene will introduce some new story element, but the action is never suspended for long. Instead friendly faces pop up in-game to tell you what's happening and what extra labours you may want to undertake. Success is measured in dragon eggs won back and having enough gems to pay for doors to be opened and helpers freed. It also helps that you can travel about with just brief loading sequences between the huge levels (during which your progress is saved), making the game feel like one continuous adventure.

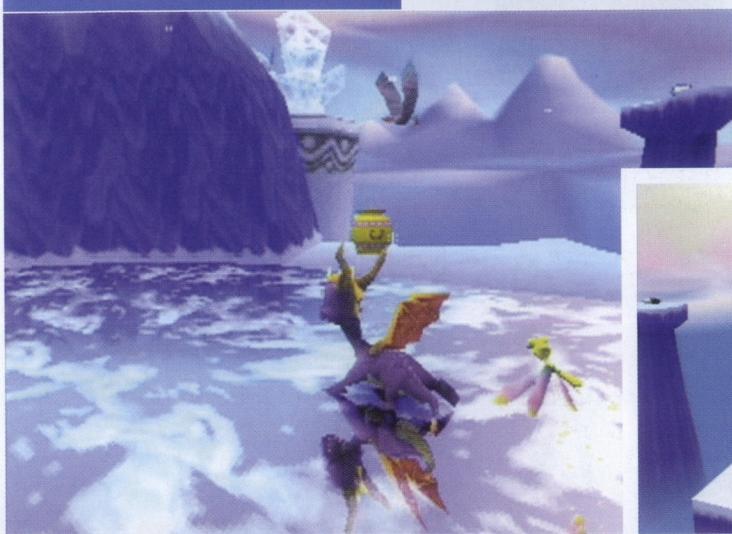
Despite being much harder than the original, *Spyro 2* was rightly criticised in some quarters for being too easy, and while the first few worlds of *Spyro 3*



Spyro Year Of The Dragon



POW! Clamber on to a field gun and you can shatter these ice sculptures. Take to the air in the speedway levels and enter a biplane race



control and a hefty bucket of mini-games"

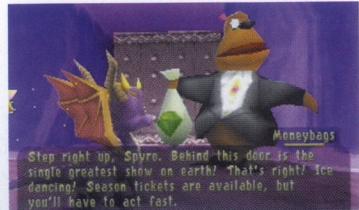
aren't that tough to unlock, some of the stages are trickiness itself to complete. Tearing about in a powerboat while shelling a shark submarine isn't easy, and catching an egg thief accelerating along a super-charged track will take plenty of practice. Just when you think you've seen all a world has to offer, you'll find an aerial speedway section or discover another sub-boss who must be defeated.

While many other series – X-Men and Toshinden come to mind – go stale over time, Spyro just gets better. Insomniac has never compromised in its quest to create games that appeal to kids without patronising them, while reminding oldsters why they first picked up a joypad, back when they were knee-high to a giant mutant grasshopper.

Pete Wilton



Blast your way through the rhynoc hordes using your rockets. The Sarge can flap his way out of trouble



It's a gem. Money comes in the form of gems. Get enough and Moneybags (above) will open up all kinds of levels



Hiya Sheila! While you were gone, a bunch of rhynocs kicked us out of our houses. It's OK though... Bobby, Pete and I are working on a clever plan to take them back.

HOW TO...

BOMB THE BASE

Sgt Byrd's home base has a rather nasty rhynoc infestation. If your standard rocket launcher won't get the little blighters to shift then how about a few bombs dropped down their bally windpipes, eh what?



First you must find your bombs. Like most weapon power-ups, these are nabbed by breaking open suspiciously ordinary-looking crates.



If the Sarge wants to drop anything while in flight, ⓧ brings up this handy sight to help you aim your load precisely – bombs away!



KA-BOOM! Congratulations! You've just sent the first rhynoc into orbit. Heaven knows how he'll get back down but we just don't care!

**IF YOU LIKE THIS
THEN LOOK AT...**

APE ESCAPE

Primates go on the rampage in this brilla, chimp-bagging platform puzzler DPM47 9/10

OFFICIAL UK
PlayStation
Magazine

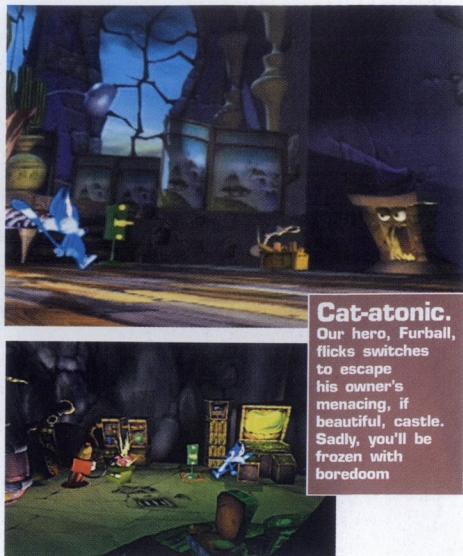
VERDICT

■ GRAPHICS	Cartoony 3D that deserves to be on a gallery wall 10
■ GAMEPLAY	Leaping, flying, racing, shooting, puzzling, bombing 10
■ LIFESPAN	Finished all the speedways and all the battles? Didn't think so 9

■ OVERALL
A fitting final bow for one of PlayStation's star performers. Charming, intelligent and funny, *Spyro 3* is also a beautifully constructed title with a build quality superior to your average BMW. Faultless

10
OUT OF 10

Beware: Evil Baroness!
No, not the haggard Tory peer Lady Thatcher, but Toonenstein, who makes the Iron Lady look more like a jellied eel... or something else renowned for its softness



Cat-atomic.
Our hero, Furball, flicks switches to escape his owner's menacing, if beautiful, castle. Sadly, you'll be frozen with boredom

SUFFER THE LITTLE CHILDREN...



Toonenstein

“It’s great eye candy without any semblance of content”

FACTFILE

PUBLISHER	Virgin
DEVELOPER	Terra Glyph
RELEASE DATE	Out now
AGE RESTRICTION	None
NUMBER OF PLAYERS	One

Should parents need a good reason to get their offspring out for a bit of fresh air, all they need do is cram *Toonenstein* into the house PlayStation. While Terra Glyph's game can be forgiven some of its limitations – after all, it's targeted at the youngest gamers – it can't be forgiven for insulting the intelligence of four to five-year-olds with virtually non-existent gameplay.

Based on the *Tiny Toons* cartoon series in which young relatives of Bugs Bunny and co get into 'hilarious' scrapes, *Toonenstein* follows Hampton The Pig and Plucky Duck as they enter a foreboding castle in search of riches. Needless to say, the evil Baroness Toonenstein has evil intentions regarding the pair, and an exit plan forms the bulk of what action there is.

IF YOU LIKE THIS
THEN LOOK AT...
CRASH BANDICOOT 3
(OPM40 9/10)
The Crash formula tweaked and updated to produce pure quality platformer

Bizarrely, though, *Toonenstein* then throws in an additional character – Furball, the Baroness' cat – who assumes the starring role and reduces the pig and duck to bit-part actors who trot about on screen, occasionally treating us to tedious comedic outbursts.

To facilitate his own escape and that of the hapless duo, Furball must find electrical generators within the game's 36-screen setting, using them to power a lift to the exit. To this end, a series of icons appear at the bottom of the screen, presenting you with movement options or indicating that something will happen if the **X** button is pressed. And that's it. You wander around then sit back to watch the animations you've uncovered. It's far from involving and never satisfying.

Granted, the graphics are excellent, while the animation and voice-overs are

indistinguishable from the Warner Bros cartoon. But if the price for this is stuff-all gameplay, then it's too high. Things are spiced up when Furball is attacked by flying bombs and the game switches all-too briefly to a first-person shooter. But these are brief hopeful asides compared to the tedious main task, and little compensation for the lengthy loading time you have to endure.

As games based on cartoons go, *Toonenstein* is very close to its subject matter – but only in the sense that it's great eye candy without any semblance of content. The lack of any real gameplay is unforgivable, as is the fact that the mission can be solved in less than an hour simply by visiting every room and pressing every button. Should only be used as punishment. ■

Steve Merrett

PlayStation
Magazine

VERDICT

- GRAPHICS
- GAMEPLAY
- LIFESPAN

- Stunning. But tiresome animated interludes **9**
- Just the occasional button press **1**
- Interest will wane before the castle is explored **2**

- OVERALL
- It's hard to see who *Toonenstein* is aimed at. There's little gameplay, and the lack of interaction will alienate even the youngest user. Its tedious button-pressing reduces it to little more than a graphical sideshow **3**

3
OUT OF 10



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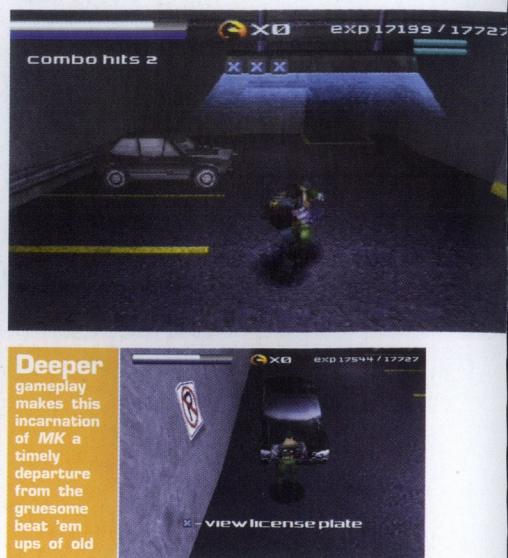
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REVIEW



Shot in the dark. Sniper Mode includes an instant-kill 'head shot', a handy supplement to the bare-handed combos and special moves



Deeper gameplay makes this incarnation of MK a timely departure from the gruesome beat 'em ups of old

HARD MAN JAX TRACKS AN OL' ENEMY ON THE RUN



Mortal Kombat Special Forces

“It combines roaming 3D adventure with punch ‘n’ kick scrapping”

FACTFILE

PUBLISHER	Midway
DEVELOPER	In-house
RELEASE DATE	Out now
AGE RESTRICTION	15 and over
NUMBER OF PLAYERS	One

Mortal Kombat Special Forces is a spin-off from the hugely successful beat 'em up series. It takes up the story of Agent Jax, the mound of military muscle that fans of the series will recall from previous MK titles. Jax's arch rival, Kano, and his gang of cronies (including pyrotechnics master No Face and beautiful-but-deadly ninja mistress Tasia) have escaped from a maximum-security prison, and Jax must see to it that the malicious mob are suitably dealt with before they get down to some unrestricted carnage.

Bearing a passing resemblance to the disappointing Fighting Force 2 (OPM54 6/10), the game combines elements of roaming 3D adventure with traditional punch 'n' kick scrapping. There's a share of Metal Gear Solid in there too, satisfying

the desires of anyone who's at their happiest when toting an Uzi 9mm.

The action kicks off in a disused warehouse, and involves Jax collecting access codes or fiddling with computers to open doors and carry out his mission, while all the time under attack from fist and gunfire. Once their goons are mullered, the escaped convicts await you at the end of the level, each with their own unpleasant special ability.

The puzzle-solving aspect is relatively unchallenging but, as you'd expect from the MK crew, the main element of Special Forces is the fighting. Battering baddies earns you experience points which unlock various combo moves, when enough noses have been bloodied. There are weapons to collect, too, as you edge further into the gang's hideout, and pretty early on you'll be able to snipe away in

true Solid Snake-style. Sniper Mode proves effective for taking out unsuspecting gang members in the distant darkness, but get it wrong and Jax could find himself getting pummelled from all sides by the Black Dragon thugs.

Although the button configuration is a little complex at first, those nimble gaming fingers will soon adjust. In no time you'll be toggling between shotgun and iron fists and topping up the health bar mid-combat, all in one smooth movement.

Aside from this, Special Forces isn't the most demanding game, but the levels begin to sprawl as you progress and a certain amount of tactical planning is required to conserve ammo and special-move juice for the bosses. All in all, it's playability and fast-paced action are a welcome addition to the MK series. ■

Nick Ellis

**IF YOU LIKE THIS
THEN LOOK AT...**

METAL GEAR SOLID (OPM42 10/10)
There are more than a few nods to this all-time classic stealth 'em up in Special Forces. If you haven't played MGS, why not?

**OFFICIAL UK
PlayStation
Magazine**

VERDICT

■ GRAPHICS

Atmospheric and crisp 7

■ OVERALL

Available at Platinum price, Special Forces turns out to be a highly entertaining and worthwhile little number that nearly slipped through the OPM net. Won't keep you going 'til MGS2, but play it anyway

■ GAMEPLAY

Fuses a variety of styles to good effect 8

■ LIFESPAN

Eight levels of action – not bad for the cost 7

7

OUT OF 10

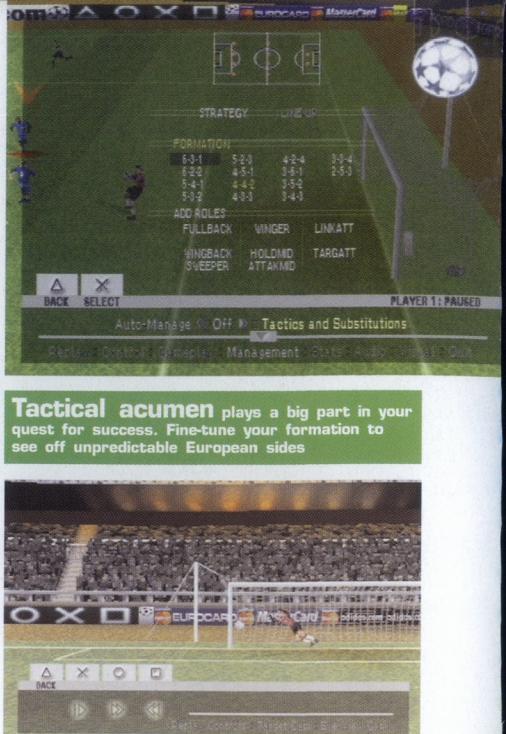
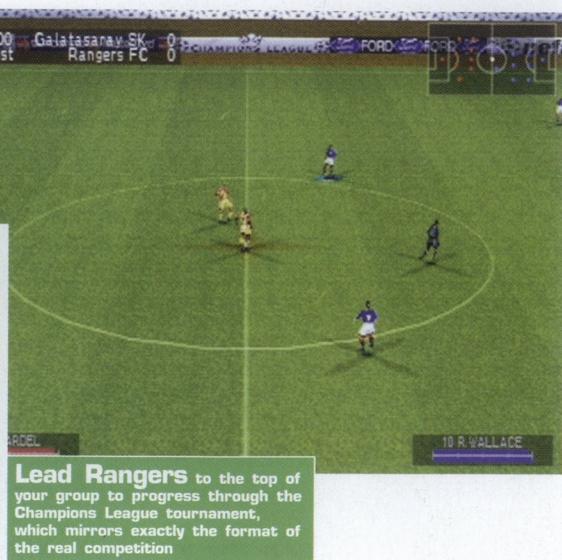
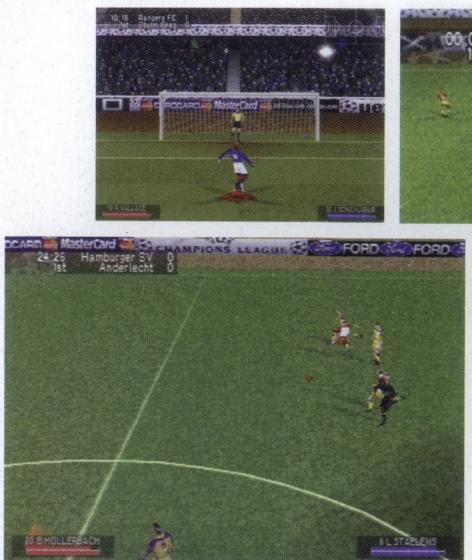
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REVIEW



TAKE 2 HOLDS THE CHAMPIONS LEAGUE CROWN – BUT FOOTBALL IS THE REAL WINNER



UEFA Champions League Season 2000/2001

“It is the details that impress, both in control and in terms of AI”

FACTFILE

PUBLISHER	Take 2
DEVELOPER	Silicon Dreams
RELEASE DATE	Out now
AGE RESTRICTION	None
NUMBER OF PLAYERS	One to eight

IF YOU LIKE THIS
THEN LOOK AT...
ISS PRO EVOLUTION (OPM5 9/10)
Effortlessly recreates the skill and
tactical play of football

The success of *Champions League* games has always been in the detail, and *2000/2001* is no different. In the general skill area, passing and shooting are as dependent on timing and precision as they are in the real thing. The main difference, though, is that *2000/2001* doesn't presume that players aren't up to the subtleties of ball control.

This version lets the player delight in the glory of a ball that is chested down, caught on the bounce, or simply knocked forward for an attacking play. *ISS Pro Evolution* may still have the upper hand in terms of dexterity and gameplay, but no other game walks the tightrope of arcade gratification and realistic control better than *2000/2001*.

But again, from this solid core of immediacy it is the details that really

impress, both in control and in terms of AI. To see a defender standing on the line to head away a free kick makes you wonder why it hasn't been done before. Similarly, the occasionally brilliant positioning of the CPU frontline means that moments when a goalkeeper spills a shot only to see it land at the feet of a striker are as heart-in-mouth as watching it on Sky Sports.

It's all very well hammering \triangle in readiness to receive a beautifully flighted cross, but if your timing is out, the ball will either sail over the bar or, even worse, the recipient will stick out a leg but miss it entirely. The same logic also now applies to the through-ball, with only passes that are timed to perfection splitting the defence. This level of skill is continued throughout the game, and for those keen on showboating, it's possible

to juggle the ball while on the move, or use combinations of button presses to effect drag-backs, one-twos and gravity-defying volleys with differing success.

Of course, every team has its weak links and *Champions League 2000/2001* is no different. Tackling is still rather imprecise, with the referee penalising seemingly innocuous challenges, while strikers often hang back rather than pick up easy tap-ins. Overall, though, *2000/2001* outplays most of the competition with ease. Just do yourself a favour – skip the Novice level and its 13-11 scorelines and play the game on Intermediate with the shot targeting switched off. You'll wince at missed opportunities, yell at lacklustre defenders, and sigh with relief at deflected goals. But isn't that what football is all about? ■

Steve Merrett

OFFICIAL UK
PlayStation
Magazine

VERDICT

■ GRAPHICS	Detailed and well-animated players, excellent TV-style presentation	8
■ GAMEPLAY	Instant gratification, but plenty of tricks to be learnt	7
■ LIFESPAN	It'll run for longer than Michael Owen	9

■ OVERALL
Immediate enough to please the *FIFA* crowd, but with the essential depth to prolong its life. A sublime control system is linked with strong player AI to create the best arcade-orientated footie title to date

8

OUT OF 10

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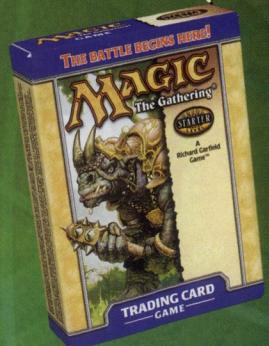


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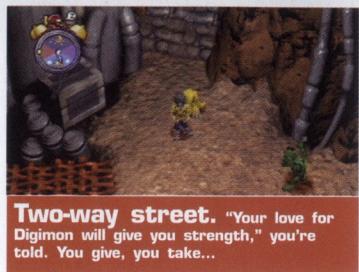


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Two-way street. "Your love for Digimon will give you strength," you're told. You give, you take...



Little squirts. Those cute little monsters walk chirpily beside you, daydreaming about their little monster girlfriends and their favourite food. Or, in this case, pooping on your gran's lawn



BEHOLD THE BURGER KING OF MONSTER TRAINING GAMES...

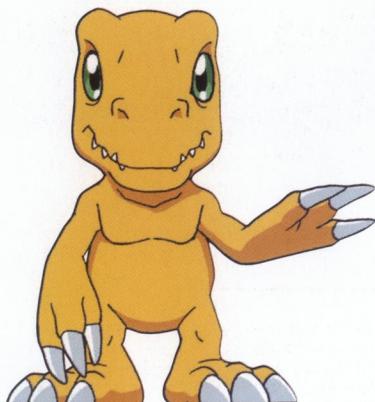


Digimon World

“The real meat of the game is the combat. As you stroll around

FACTFILE

PUBLISHER	Crave
DEVELOPER	Bandai
RELEASE DATE	Out Now
AGE RESTRICTION	None
NUMBER OF PLAYERS	One to two



Are you the sort of person who buys Pepsi Cola because you 'prefer the taste'? If you are you may well enjoy *Digimon World*, the 'other' monster-training game. The one that isn't, well, Youknowwhatemon.

Actually, *Digimon World* isn't the only other monster-training game. Just last month we were playing *Monster Rancher*, the monsters-in-your-CD-collection game. But *Digimon* boasts a full complement of marketing extensions, including key-ring battle toys and a cartoon series. And it could be argued that, because it's from Bandai, and Bandai created Tamagotchi, and Tamagotchi started the whole monster-rearing saga, strictly speaking *Digimon* is the Coke of the monster-training world rather than the Pepsi.

But anyway. Pop in the disc and three things will happen. First, you'll metamorphose into a small boy with a huge head and freckles. Second, you'll be sucked through a wormhole into the world of *Digimon*. And third, you'll be followed everywhere by a small,

innocuous, but eager-to-please monster. *Digimon World* is organised rather like an RPG. You start off in a village, where you can stroll around, chat to the residents, and buy things. Then, when you've exhausted the possibilities there, you can strike out in search of adventure.

The first place you should head for is the training area, where you can start to work your monster into fighting shape, Rocky-style. Then you'll probably want to go to the toilet. No, really.

Digimon World takes its Tamagotchi heritage seriously, endowing your monster with a full complement of bodily functions. When he's hungry, a little thought bubble appears over his head with some food in it, and you have to find something for him to eat. When he's tired, a bubble full of Zs appears, and you must put him to

bed. And when his digestive processes have run their course, you'd better move fast. How entertaining you'll find this will depend on how long your old

Tamagotchi lasted before being crushed underfoot, but it'll certainly raise a smile. The first few times, anyway.



The real meat of the game, however, is the combat. As you stroll around the map, tutting at the incessant disc-accessing and the way the music restarts on every screen, other monsters will pile in. Combat is a pretty hands-off affair, as far as the trainer is concerned.

All you can really do is watch and pray, although as your monster's abilities grow you'll be able to give him more guidance. Should the little fellow win, his vanquished foe will sometimes join the monsters living in the village, unlocking further screens to explore. But should he



Over-zealous bouncing by your rotund little pals can result in a lethal pancaking for our hero. Never mind, judging by the comment he seemed to enjoy it. Mmm...



Get your ass in shape by hitting the gym. There your monster will learn all the fighting skills he'll need to grind rivals' faces into the dirt like the sorry little creatures they are

HOW TO...

RAISE A MONSTER



Remember Tamagotchi? *Digimon World* is worryingly similar. Right from the word go, your monster will demand attention. Here, for example, he's hungry. Luckily there's a farm just next to the village, and the farmer's an obliging sort.



After a hard day's fighting, your monster will be in need of some kip, which he can get in Jijimon's house. Unfortunately, as far as we can work out, you can only put him to bed for an hour at a time, with much disc-accessing between each stint.



Fans of toilet humour will be in their element here, as that food you crammed into his gob earlier nears the end of its alimentary journey. Find a WC pronto or risk leaving a slippery surprise on the grass.

the map, other monsters will pile in"

lose, your monstrous mate waves farewell to one of his three lives.

With its pretty graphics and exciting battles, *Digimon World* is agreeable enough. But it's a bit odd. The feeding/sleeping/pooing side swiftly wears thin, and should have been dropped for more controllable battles. And the random monster attacks grow similarly threadbare.

Most traumatic of all, however, is that just as you're growing attached to your monster, he 'digivolves' into a different one – which then has to be reared from scratch. If you play the game for long enough you'll play with all 80 Digimon. But (sniff) you don't even get a chance to say goodbye. It gives you an idea of how those people who train guide dogs for the blind must feel. ■

Jonathan Davies



The 'Digi' side can be seen in the pieces of circuitry that show through the bald patches in the grass, and the floppy disks that beef up your monster's stats

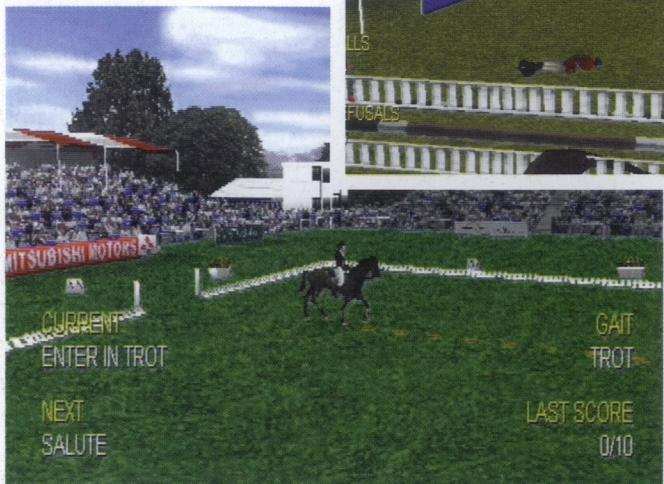
**IF YOU LIKE THIS
THEN LOOK AT...**

MONSTER RANCHER (OPM64 8/10)
More combat-focused, with a neat CD-collection-plundering twist. And you can take your monster to the grave

■ GRAPHICS	Cheerfully chunky scenery and comely monsters	8
■ GAMEPLAY	Shallow and repetitive, yes, but diverting too	6
■ LIFESPAN	Plenty to plough through if it does grab you	7

■ OVERALL
A likeable variation on the Tamagotchi theme, designed to appeal to the maternal side of us all. The feeding/sleeping/wiping routine may start to grate, though, if the sound effects don't finish you off first

REVIEW



No-blow area. You can mount them, whip them and stroke them to your heart's content. But, for the love of the Lord, don't blow up their nose, whatever you do...



Pos	Rider	DR	CC	SJ	Overall
1	HEATH RYAN	327	0.0	0.0	327
2	VIRGINIA MCGRATH	335	0.0	0.0	335
3	PASCAL LEROY	361	0.0	0.0	361
4	ANDREAS DIBOWSKI	360	0.0	0.0	360
5	MARY KING	365	0.0	0.0	365
6	VAUGHN JEFFERIS	373	0.0	0.0	373
7	KAREN O'CONNOR	400	0.0	0.0	400
21	MATTHIAS BAUMANN	1000	0.0	0.0	1000

Once, twice, three times a winner. The triumvirate of events will test your wits, riding skills and, frankly, your patience to the max

Kentucky Event Dressage				
Category	Judge H	Judge C	Judge M	Total
Test Mark	0.070	0.070	0.070	0.070
Collective Mark	0.080	0.080	0.080	0.080
Mark sub total				0.0
Penalty sub total (x 0.6)				0.0
Errors of Course				2.0
Total penalties			DISQUALIFIED	100.0
	CONTINUE			VIEW REPLAY

MORE HORSEPLAY FROM MIDAS. GIDDY UP...



Equestriad 2001

“Its reliance on a simplistic approach weighs the game down”

PUBLISHER	Midas
DEVELOPER	Tantalus
RELEASE DATE	Out now
AGE RESTRICTION	None
PLAYERS	One to two

Well, all credit to Midas for having another crack at bringing the... um, thrills of three-day eventing to PlayStation. Unfortunately, the trio of dressage, cross-country and show jumping events are rather too sedate to be successful videogame material, and their additional failure to capture anything of the skill of the real thing leaves *Equestriad 2001* fit only for the knackers' yard.

It isn't the limitations of horse-jumping that afflict this game, however, more its lacklustre approach. Granted, the dressage event was a non-starter from the word go. After all, making a horse walk at different speeds within a big field, pausing only to salute the judges, was never going to capture the imagination, and it doesn't. Rather, it's

Equestriad 2001's reliance on such a simplistic approach that weighs the game down like a 20-stone rider. Even the possibilities afforded by the show jumping and cross-country events are limited. Basically, players are left to accelerate and decelerate the horse, guide him toward the next jump and simply press the X button at the right time to send the nag sailing over to the next hazard.

While the game is enhanced by frequent, but banal, commentary and courses based on Kentucky, Badminton and Burghley, the limitations of the gameplay are impossible to escape. Ultimately, the proceedings boil down to learning when to canter, trot and jump in order to slice seconds off previous records. This idea is fine in games such as *Gran Turismo*, where precision manoeuvres and tight cornering can shave

seconds from lap times. In *Equestriad 2001*, however, the speed restrictions and poor manoeuvring abilities of the four-legged racers make such gains pointless, while the game's laid-back approach fails to give you any incentive to progress.

The strange thing is that *Equestriad 2001* genuinely wants to be the horse-riding equivalent of *FIFA*. It enables eventing fans to select from various riding luminaries, and precedes each event with a discussion and lengthy camera pan. It's all for nothing, though, because this is very ill thought-out stuff. Graphically it wavers between passable and dated – in line with the antiquated gameplay – and, if there's a PlayStation equivalent of a glue factory for games best put out of their misery, expect *Equestriad 2001* to reappear under the UHU label imminently... ■

Steve Merrett

IF YOU LIKE THIS
THEN LOOK AT...
MARY KING'S RIDING STAR
(OPM55 4/10)
Equally poor, but your only alternative

OFFICIAL UK
PlayStation
Magazine
VERDICT

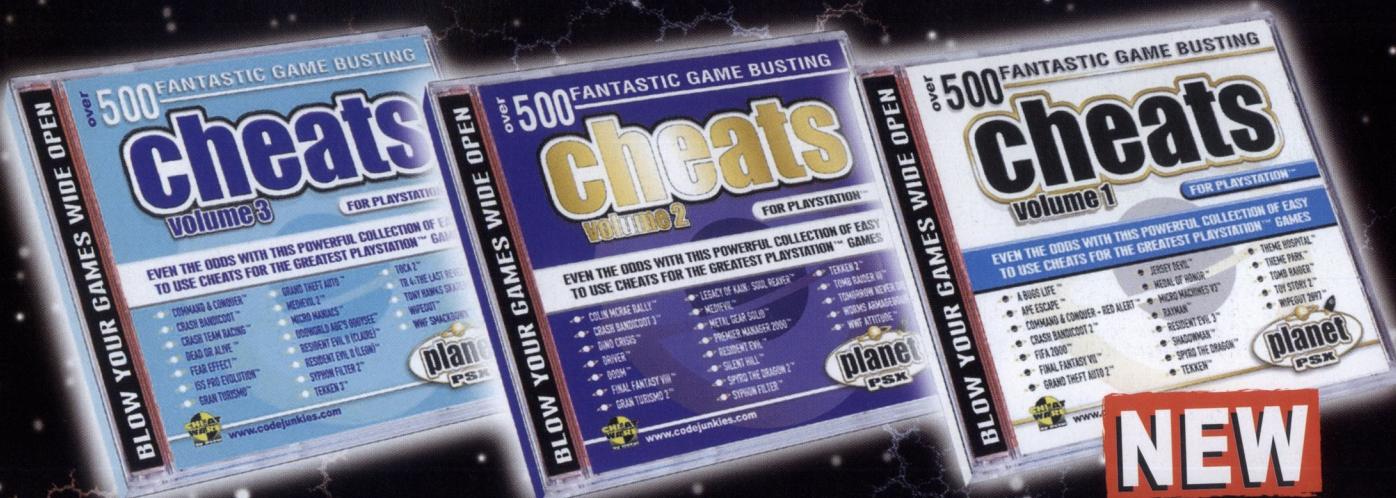
- GRAPHICS
- GAMEPLAY
- LIFESPAN

- Chunky, unimpressive and dated 4
- Too simplistic and formulaic 4
- Only three events – if you count dressage 3

- OVERALL
- Lacks ambition, bearable aesthetics and content. The controls totally fail to reflect the skill needed by show jumpers and cross-country eventers. They shoot horse games, don't they?

4
OUT OF 10

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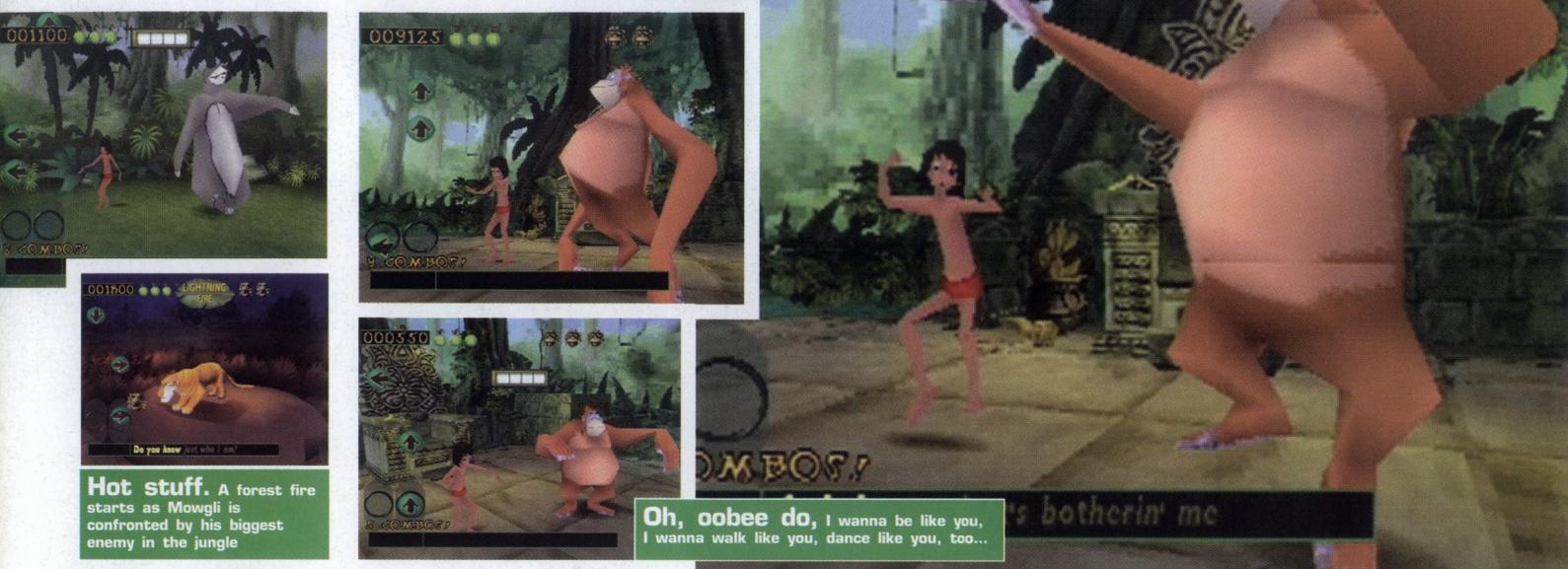


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REVIEW



WE'VE HEARD OF JUNGLE FEVER, BUT JUNGLE JIVING – WHAT CRAZINESS IS THIS?



Jungle Book Groove Party

“More dance fun to offer than Britney Spears in school uniform”

FACTFILE



PUBLISHER	SCEE
DEVELOPER	Ubi Soft
RELEASE DATE	November
AGE RESTRICTION	None
NUMBER OF PLAYERS	One to two

Frequent visitors to the arcades will be familiar with the practice of using feet, rather than fingers, to play games. Although this might sound bizarre, it's actually very easy to do. All the symbols you'd normally find on your joypad are displayed on a specially designed mat. You stand in the middle and step forward for up, back for down, left for left and, yes, you guessed it, right for right.

Jungle Book Groove Party has been specifically designed for the mat, and is the first of its kind to be sold in the UK. If you haven't had the pleasure of using a dance mat before, there's a whole heap of fun waiting for you. The on-screen action is similar to *PaRappa The Rappa* and *Beatmania*: symbols scroll down the screen until they reach a circular target, at

which point you're required to stand on the corresponding symbol. This is made easier by the fact that all the button-presses are in time to the music, which means that if you're using the mat, and moving your feet in time to the music... you're dancing.

Things start off relatively easily – it's just a step to the left, then a jump to the right, put your hands on your hips (oops, wrong musical, but the idea is the same, just without the cross-dressing). As you progress through the game, both the plot (basically the same as the classic Disney film) and the dance moves become ever more complicated, until it reaches a point where you're left feeling like a reject from *Fame* and suffering from a bad case of jungle fever.

Of course, this mini-disco display is hilarious for anybody watching, and *Jungle*

Book is perfect for multiplayer action at parties. Whether it's jelly and ice cream for a group of toddlers, or vodka jellies and whipped cream for a more adult get-together, the game's hysterical, and the only arguments you're likely to get are over whose go it is next. For an instant party, all you need are two mats and the Versus Mode. While this is on the pricey side to set up (the game costs £49.99 with the mat, about £24.99 without and the mat can be bought separately for £29.99), you'll certainly get your money's worth.

With more dance fun to offer than Britney Spears in school uniform, *Jungle Book Groove Party* has to be a hit. The only reservation we might have is that, as with any novelty game, its initial sparkle could soon wear off. ■

Catherine Channon

OFFICIAL UK
PlayStation
Magazine

VERDICT

GRAPHICS	Bright colourful and typically Disney	8
GAMEPLAY	Funnier than the day Dan said he was "a bit of lady's man"	9
LIFESPAN	It's a novelty, it wears off, but the mat works with other games	6

OVERALL
The first of its kind to make it to the UK, *Groove Party* is lots of fun and a good example of what's to come. Classic tracks like *Bare Necessities* make it perfect for monkeying around

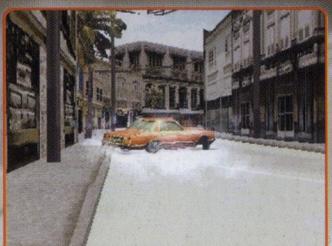
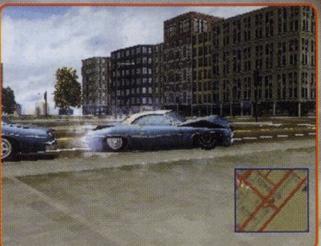
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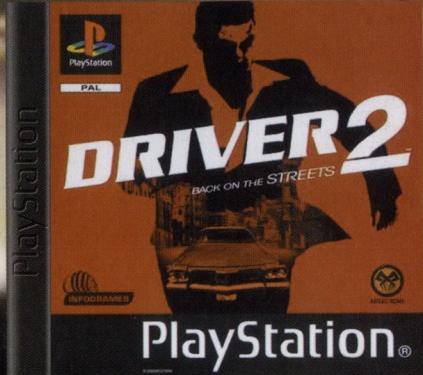


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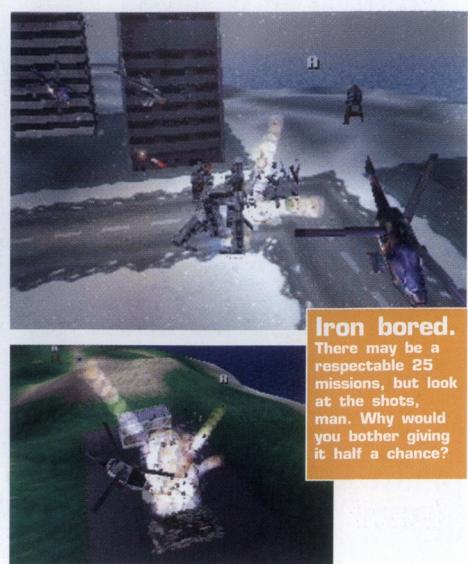
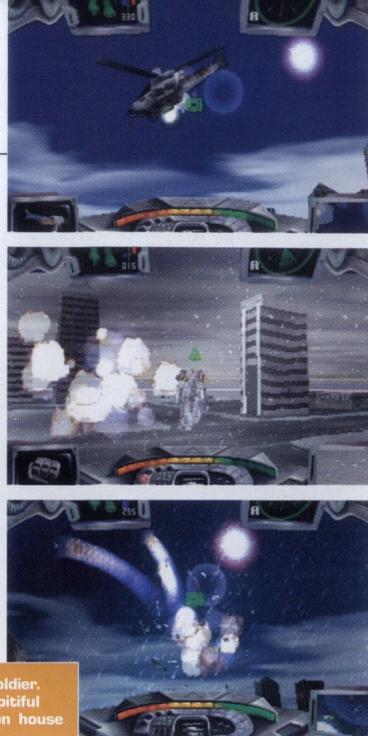
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REVIEW



Iron curtains adorn the bedroom of the Iron Soldier. They ensure he doesn't have to witness drab scenery and pitiful explosions in the war-torn landscape that surrounds his iron house



Iron bored.
There may be a respectable 25 missions, but look at the shots, man. Why would you bother giving it half a chance?

NOT SO MUCH AN IRON GIANT – MORE A RUSTING HEAP



Iron Soldier 3

“Only the CG cut-sequences come close to any kind of quality”

FACTFILE

PUBLISHER	Telegames
DEVELOPER	Eclipse Software
RELEASE DATE	November
AGE RESTRICTION	11 and over
NUMBER OF PLAYERS	One to two

IF YOU LIKE THIS
THEN LOOK AT...
ARMOURED CORE (OPM3 8/10)
Mech fighting as it should be done

Technology evolves much as human beings evolve – just a bit more quickly. Whereas it's going to take us a few million years to develop telekinesis and a second stomach, it's taken Sony just half a decade to go from PS1 to PS2.

That said, some beginnings are pretty inauspicious. Let us hypothesise for a moment about the mobile robo-tanks better known as 'mechs'. Presumably, when Japanese military contractors finally get around to building the prototype mech, it'll be clumsy, slow and difficult to manoeuvre. Certainly, the mechs in *Iron Soldier 3* appear to be at an early stage of technological evolution. Either that or somebody doesn't understand difficult concepts like 'gameplay'.

Set in the future, *Iron Soldier 3* occurs during a period of apocalyptic war.

Clambering into the guts of the titular metal man, you engage in 25 missions torn from the Top 10 list of War Game Clichés. From basic all-out combat to the ever-popular protect-the-convoy-of-trucks, *Iron Soldier 3* is essentially Electronic Art's helicopter-driven *Strike* series with legs (so to speak).

Rockets, cannons and metal fists are all employed in the smashing of enemy mechs, helicopters, tanks and buildings. Buildings are particularly important because they contain giant crates that can restock your limited ammunition. There are also a couple of Two-Player Modes, one of which is co-operative, requiring one player to control movement and the other to handle weapons systems.

You may be wondering what happened to the previous *Iron Soldier* games. They were released for the Atari

Jaguar and, even by that format's pitifully low standards, they were utterly awful. *Iron Soldier 3* is nothing if not faithful to its predecessors' trademark rubbishness. From its laborious controls to its bland graphics, it barely even tries to be good. There are moments when matters almost begin to get exciting, as you duck down side streets to avoid a hail of lead, then double back on a squad of tanks, but the clumsy way your iron soldier moves just piles on the frustration. Maybe you'd be able to forgive this if the visuals were half-decent, but they're dull and repetitive.

Only the CG cut-sequences come close to any kind of quality, but that's probably only because they were put together by an external team. *Iron Soldier 3* can join its predecessors on the scrap heap of obscurity. ■

Paul Rose

OFFICIAL UK
PlayStation
Magazine

VERDICT

■ GRAPHICS	Drab buildings and featureless battlefields	3	■ OVERALL
■ GAMEPLAY	Hackneyed missions and flawed controls	3	As awful as it is unoriginal, despite the pretty computer-generated link sequences. When the only thing to recommend a game is its cut-scenes, you know you've got a stinker on your hands
■ LIFESPAN	Would be less painful if it killed itself	4	

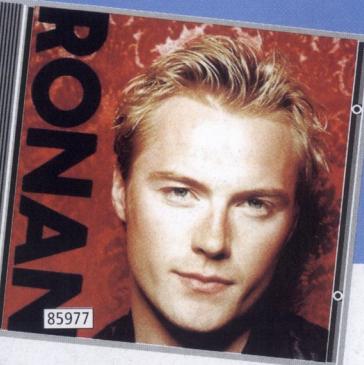
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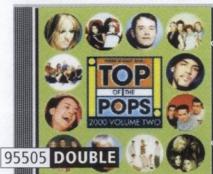
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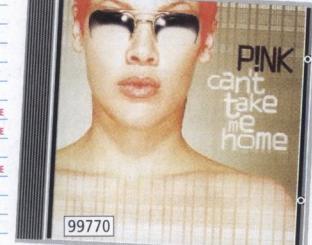


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All created equal. The game gives you the chance to match lightweights against heavyweights to decide who is the best pound-for-pound fighter. Naturally, all their stats have been equalised



NAZ'S FIRST APPEARANCE IN A VIDEOGAME. IT WILL QUICKLY BE FORGOTTEN



Prince Naseem Boxing

"When the boxers start to shuffle around the ring you quickly

FACTFILE



PUBLISHER	Codemasters
DEVELOPER	In-house
RELEASE DATE	Out now
AGE RESTRICTION	None
NUMBER OF PLAYERS	One to eight

After spending three years in development hell, *Prince Naseem Boxing* is finally here – but why the delay?

According to Codemasters, the game has been ready for release several times but has been put back to jump through the lofty quality-assurance hoops that have helped the company craft classics such as *Colin McRae Rally* and *TOCA World Touring Cars*. Was it worth the wait, then? Hell, no.

Not that *Prince Naseem Boxing* is utterly awful; it's just that the game simply doesn't live up to the high standards claimed by Codies. Take the character animation, for example. Fair enough, the decision not to use motion-capture technology needn't preclude fluid movement or realistic graphics. In fact, the fighters look pretty good when they're static, if a little stylised with their hunched shoulders.

When the boxers start to shuffle around the ring, however, you quickly realise that things aren't quite right. All the punches are telegraphed stabs whose

power you can delay by pulling back your fists for what seems like an age. Things get far worse when you start 'making contact', for want of a better description of the badly animated jabs. The collision detection is inadequate and when you start dodging blows, you crane to one side ridiculously. To misquote famous boxing scribe George Plimpton, it's like you're leaning out of a car window, trying to head-but^t passing lamp-posts.

The gameplay lacks the immediacy of *Ready 2 Rumble* and ignores the combination work and licences that help to make the *Knockout King* series so successful. However, *Naseem Boxing* does aim to offer you something that doesn't appear in either of its rivals. If you manage to evade your opponents' shots, you will gradually top-up a special punch bar. When it's full, you have ten seconds to pull off one of two big punches that will severely damage your foe.

Another meter plots how many points you'd get if the round ended at that point. While this removes the unpredictability and excitement of the

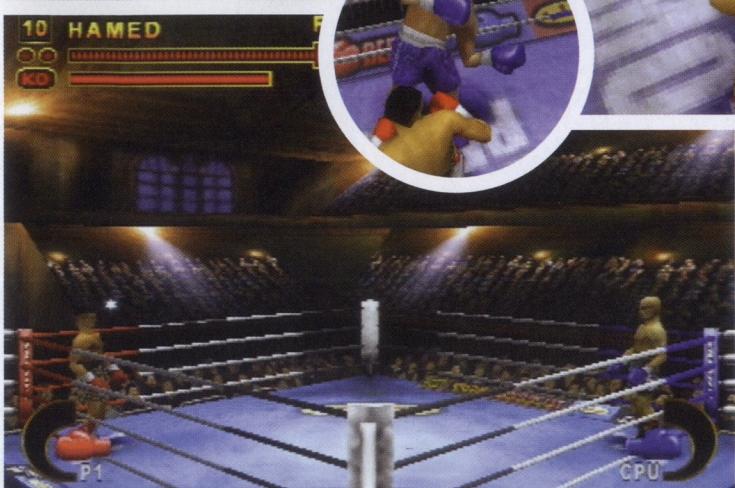
scorecard, it also enables you to mount flurries to rescue points. If you are knocked to the floor, you enter a sub-game in which you have to press randomly appearing buttons in time to a bobbing needle. It's a welcome hint of originality, as are the seven difficulty settings that appear in the game.

A knockout tournament offers the chance for you and up to seven pals to select from 16 boxers – though Naz is the only named boxer – and there's a handy eight-player, winner-stays-on Versus Mode. However, the best element of the game is the career-based World Mode. Select from a range of boxers at three generic weights, or edit your own, and build him up by allocating training time to various gym activities and rest. You must also control food intake as you aim to strengthen your fighter's physical condition and help him achieve his correct weight.

Between fights you receive tips on your regime from the Prince himself, who also gives an analysis of your performances as well as comments on

Prince Naseem Boxing

Gym work is a good way of introducing you to the curious collision detection that characterises the game. The damage you receive here is only likely to tarnish your pride and not bloody your nose

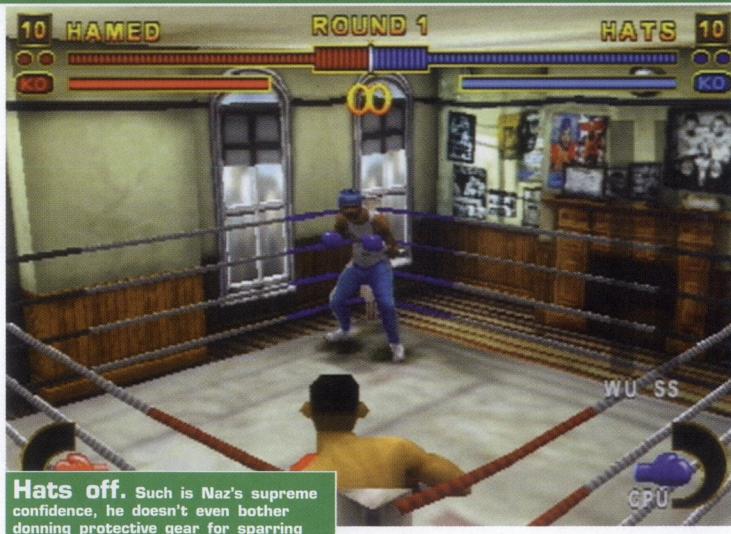


realise that things aren't quite right"

prospective opponents. Ultimately you are aiming to push your fighter through the ranks to win a world championship belt and unify the titles by beating a rival champion. World Mode adds a thread of narrative as you battle opponents with varying styles and statistics.

With contenders Ready 2 Rumble Round 2 and Knockout Kings 2001 in the ring, there'll be great competition for the boxing-game spot in your Christmas shopping trolley this year. Unfortunately, Prince Naseem Boxing succeeds in treading a middle ground between the two approaches by ignoring the most appealing qualities of each title. The result is a game that lacks punch and looks clumsy during play. Disregard the rivals at your peril. ■

Lee Hall



Hats off. Such is Naz's supreme confidence, he doesn't even bother donning protective gear for sparring

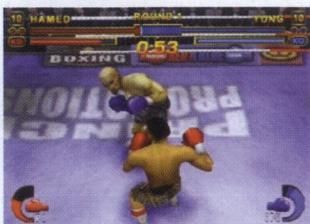
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VERDICT

■ GRAPHICS	Graphics look appealing, until you start moving	7
■ GAMEPLAY	Simple control system, but poorly animated with no fluid combos	5
■ LIFESPAN	Unengaging Two-Player Mode. Slightly better in World Mode	5

■ OVERALL
The game tries to combine the conservatism of Knockout Kings and the flamboyancy of Ready 2 Rumble. The hybrid is little fun to play, clumsy and has few redeeming features. Decidedly average

HOW TO... FLOOR 'EM WITH A BANG...



Firstly toy with your opponent, jabbing infrequently and inviting them to hit you by leaving yourself open for a fraction of a second at a time...



Then dodge their blows as they start raining in by using the shoulder buttons. This will top up a power gauge indicated in the bottom-left of the screen...



Finally, press ☰ and ☱ to pull off a devastating power punch that will send them hurtling towards the canvas seeing stars.

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KNOCKOUT KINGS 2000
(OPM54 7/10)
The best boxing game for the PlayStation

5

OUT OF 10

REVIEW

MAGIC-CARPET CAPERS AND, MERCIFULLY, NO ROBIN WILLIAMS



FACTFILE

PUBLISHER	SCEE
DEVELOPER	Argonaut Software
RELEASE DATE	November
AGE RESTRICTION	None
NUMBER OF PLAYERS	One

The Disney Corporation's attempt to saturate kiddie consumer culture continues with a follow-up to passable slider-swinger *Tarzan* (OPM51 7/10). *Disney's Aladdin* sees you take charge of the baggy-trousered one for 28 levels of Arabian antics. Armed only with a scimitar, ballet skills and some useful friends, you must save the sultan, princess and kingdom from the netherworldly sorceress Nasira – and collect a fortune in gold, of course.

A 3D adventure/platformer, the game of the film involves prancing, sliding and charging around well-constructed, visually

pleasing locations, collecting coins and gems, and bashing baddies. It's marginally challenging and scores no marks for originality, but fulfil your coin quota and the end-of-level bonus games sometimes provide a swift burst of amusement.

What saves *Aladdin* from drowning in its own Disney drivel is the way the game constantly switches modes. One minute you're stealing apples from a narcoleptic street vendor, the next you're dodging collapsing pillars while riding a 240bhp Persian rug. Wholesome fun and good basic training for young cadet gamers; just too dull for hardened veterans. ■

Nick Ellis

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VERDICT

GRAPHICS	Smooth flowing, cutesy and cartoony	7
GAMEPLAY	Limited combat, but varied, slick and fairly pacy nonetheless	6
LIFESPAN	Allegedly offers 40 hours of action. Hmm...	6

OVERALL
It'll hardly have hardcore gamers rubbing their lamps with delight, Turkish or otherwise, but may provide passing entertainment for those who like to spend Sundays lounging around in *Lion King* pyjamas

6

OUT OF 10

DOLLY THE SHEEP HAS A LOT TO ANSWER FOR...



FACTFILE

PUBLISHER	JVC Interactive
DEVELOPER	Taito
RELEASE DATE	Out now
AGE RESTRICTION	None
NUMBER OF PLAYERS	One

Born of cyberpunk author William Gibson, *Ray Crisis* lies somewhere between a *Matrix* dystopian nightmare and shape-shifters cartoon *Transformers*.

"Is it possible to stop the Con-Human Organisation which joined forces with human clones?" asks the sultry female voice at the start of the game. To stop distant cousins of Megatron et al from taking over the Earth, you must climb aboard one of three Wave Riders and dive into the networks.

Choose between two modes, Arcade and Special, select your route across the apocalyptic landscape, and spark up thy

mighty ship. Three types of craft offer different weaponry, but each comprises a fire-and-forget targeting system that sits alongside a front-firing cannon, and there are power-ups to collect along the way.

Ray Crisis is the follow-up to *Ray Storm* (OPM23 6/10) and in terms of gameplay, not a lot has changed. It's an ancient concept: a vertically scrolling shooter where you blast everything into space dust before squaring up to the screen-filling bosses. However, this retro-arcader has just enough for fans of all things *R-Type* to sink their genetically modified robo-fangs into. ■

Nick Ellis

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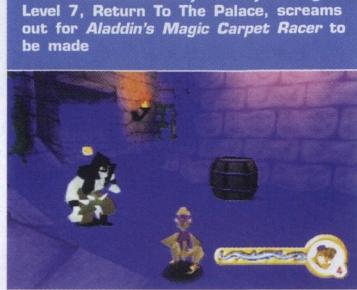
VERDICT

GRAPHICS	A satisfying polygonal 2.5D lightshow	8
GAMEPLAY	Nothing new but still fast, furious and enjoyable	7
LIFESPAN	Ascending those high-score tables becomes all-important	7

OVERALL
Delivers sweaty-palms action as you dodge incoming photon torpedoes, lock on to ground vehicles and take out the flyboys. It's sensory-overload time, with thumping soundtrack and eye-blistering explosions

7

OUT OF 10



"Robots in disguise!" You half expect one of the huge Antibody bosses to turn into a 4x4 farm vehicle. But they don't, they kill you



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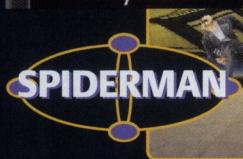


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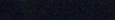
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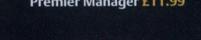
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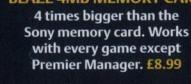


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VIRGIN UNEARTHS A TWO-PLAYER GEM...



FACTFILE

PUBLISHER	Virgin
DEVELOPER	Spook
RELEASE DATE	Out now
AGE RESTRICTION	None
NUMBER OF PLAYERS	One to two

Magical Drop

From the very first chirrup emitted by its rotund bunch of fools, lords and various medieval stars, you know what to expect from *Magical Drop*. Essentially a variant on the excellent *Bust-A-Move* series, it offers a slightly different take on the latter's fixation with collating like-coloured orbs.

In *Magical Drop*'s case, the coloured gemstones pile up on screen and must be linked in batches of three or more so that they disappear. To this end, you control one of a dozen courtiers who run around the bottom of the screen. A pulley system is used to gather the gems,

with one button used to pull down batches of like-coloured orbs and another to send them back up screen. Complex combinations are then used to clear the screen, with huge chain reactions of dispersed gems either rewarding the player or penalising the opposition in Two-Player Mode.

Despite its familiar content, *Magical Drop* seems lethargic at times, especially when compared to the likes of *Bust-A-Move* and *Puzzle Fighter*. The bizarre but frenetic Two-Player Mode saves the day, but as a solo effort *Magical Drop* doesn't have the urgency its genre demands. ■

Steve Merrett



Bust-A-Magical? The little fellas (above) use a pulley system to link up batches of gems of the same colour

6
OUT OF 10
OFFICIAL UK
PlayStation
Magazine

VERDICT

GRAPHICS	Standard gaudy puzzle-popping	5
GAMEPLAY	Entertaining, but Solo Mode lacks the necessary pace	6
LIFESPAN	The Two-Player Mode is a stayer	6

■ OVERALL
Magical Drop is familiar fare, its simplistic content and controls combining to create yet another entertaining but undemanding PlayStation puzzler clearly 'inspired' by *Bust-A-Move*

PROOF THAT TIGGERS ARE WONDERFUL THINGS...



FACTFILE

PUBLISHER	Ubi Soft
DEVELOPER	Doki Denki Studios
RELEASE DATE	Out now
AGE RESTRICTION	None
NUMBER OF PLAYERS	One

Winnie The Pooh

Tigger's Honey Hunt

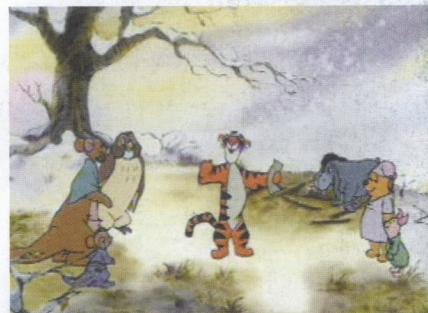
The first of a new wave of titles aimed at three to six-year-olds, *Tigger's Honey Hunt* is proof positive that children's games needn't be patronising, nor scaled-down versions of 'real' titles. Instead, *Honey Hunt* is a beautifully judged platform game which marries Disney's high production values with excellent level design and playability, its only concession to its young audience being an easier difficulty setting.

Tigger has volunteered to help Pooh gather honey jars for a party. This leads the way into an engaging platform romp, with additional collecting missions

offered via cameo appearances from Roo, Eeyore and Owl. What really makes *Tigger's Honey Hunt* so effective, though, is that it's a strong platform title in its own right. Your control over Tigger is superb, while the levels are easy to navigate. This is all excellently presented, with dozens of cut-scenes accompanying each new objective or hazard.

Although the polygonal graphics look rather primitive, *Tigger's Honey Hunt* is a solid and entertaining package. Additional sub-games such as Pooh Sticks are a nice touch, but the key to the game's success is simply that it plays very well. ■

Steve Merrett



Bouncy, trouncy, flouncy, bouncy, fun, fun, fun... *Honey Hunt* is top entertainment for parents and kids

OFFICIAL UK
PlayStation
Magazine

VERDICT

GRAPHICS	Rather bulky, but bright and colourful	6
GAMEPLAY	Simple yet challenging platform action	7
LIFESPAN	Plenty of levels and lots of incentive to play them	7

■ OVERALL
A brilliant kids' title. Basically this is a great platform game with the difficulty level toned down for the younger users. Good presentational touches and plenty of action set a new standard in 'kids' software

7
OUT OF 10

REPLAY VALUE

SHED NO TEARS FOR THE GREAT GAMES OF YESTERYEAR – THEY'LL BE BACK, AND AT A FRACTION OF THE COST. HERE ARE SOME OF THE LITTLE BLIGHTERS NOW...

PLATINUM GAME

Silent Hill



PUBLISHER
Konami
£19.99



This is not a game, it's an epic interactive psychological thriller boasting six different endings and combining strong puzzle elements with monster-bashing of the highest order.

More scary than most movie thrillers, with a brilliantly developed plot using expert scriptwriting and cinematic techniques to chilling effect. Moody, exciting and utterly engaging. Even those who don't love games will love this one. ■ LH

OFFICIAL UK
PlayStation
Magazine
VERDICT
IN OPM48 10/10

TODAY'S SCORE
A landmark game
that remains one of
the finest offerings
on PlayStation

10
OUT OF 10

TOCA Touring Car Championship



PUBLISHER
Codemasters
£9.99



Realism has always been TOCA's watchword, and here's where it all began.

It may look and feel a little dated by today's standards, but it's still a fine example of a racing game, and beats many a more modern effort into a cocked helmet. Don't expect a knockabout racer, though – the handling is very realistic and unforgiving.

TOCA will appeal to those who like a mix of Formula One and regular road racing – it's a great combination of the two. ■ AB

OFFICIAL UK
PlayStation
Magazine
VERDICT
IN OPM27 9/10

TODAY'S SCORE
Fades a little in
comparison to
WTC and GT2,
but still a corker

7
OUT OF 10

BUDGET PRICE RE-RELEASES

YE OLDE GAMES DUSTED DOWN AND SOLD OFF ON THE CHEAP – BARGAIN!

Street Fighter Alpha 3



PUBLISHER
Virgin
£9.99



The graphics are two-dimensional and cartoony, and there's not a polygon in sight. But who gives a monkey's?

SFA3 sees Ken and company doing a bit of a Tekken, with stacks of intricate moves and no less than 34 characters to choose from. Some savoury innovations, such as the guard meter, really add to the gameplay, forcing you to break down an opponent's defences before slamming them into next week. A juicy battler. ■ AB

OFFICIAL UK
PlayStation
Magazine
VERDICT
IN OPM44 9/10

TODAY'S SCORE
Playability incarnate,
SFA3 offers so much
quality for so little
money. Don't ignore it

9
OUT OF 10

Resident Evil



PUBLISHER
Virgin
£9.99



The original and, some would argue, best of the zombie-busting bunch.

All the ingredients for top survival horror action are here: a spooky old mansion, a secret laboratory, and a slick-skinned gaggle of festering mingers to pepper with buckshot. Time's been kind to

Resident Evil, and it's been massively influential. Would we have seen the likes of Dino Crisis and Silent Hill if it weren't for Resident Evil? We don't think so. Come see where it all began. ■ AB

OFFICIAL UK
PlayStation
Magazine
VERDICT
IN OPM8 9/10

TODAY'S SCORE
The granddaddy of
survival horror. Trips
down memory lane
are rarely this good

9
OUT OF 10

Micro Machines V3



PUBLISHER
Codemasters
£9.99



Micro Machines V3 is reason enough to buy a Multi Tap.

Bettered only by the glorious eight-player Micro-Maniacs, it offers more fun-per-quid-spent than you could reasonably hope for.

The premise is simple: race tiny vehicles around domestic settings, such as kitchen tables, and win. Whether you're driving a monster truck or a Sherman tank, the handling is superb, and the graphics are slick to boot. A bargain at twice the price. ■ AB

OFFICIAL UK
PlayStation
Magazine
VERDICT
IN OPM18 9/10

TODAY'S SCORE
Big laughs from cute
little cars. Fans of
Micro Machines will
dig it

9
OUT OF 10

Street Fighter Collection 2



PUBLISHER
Virgin
£9.99



As a retrospective collector's edition of the three primary incarnations of Street Fighter 2, this compilation is a fairly worthwhile purchase.

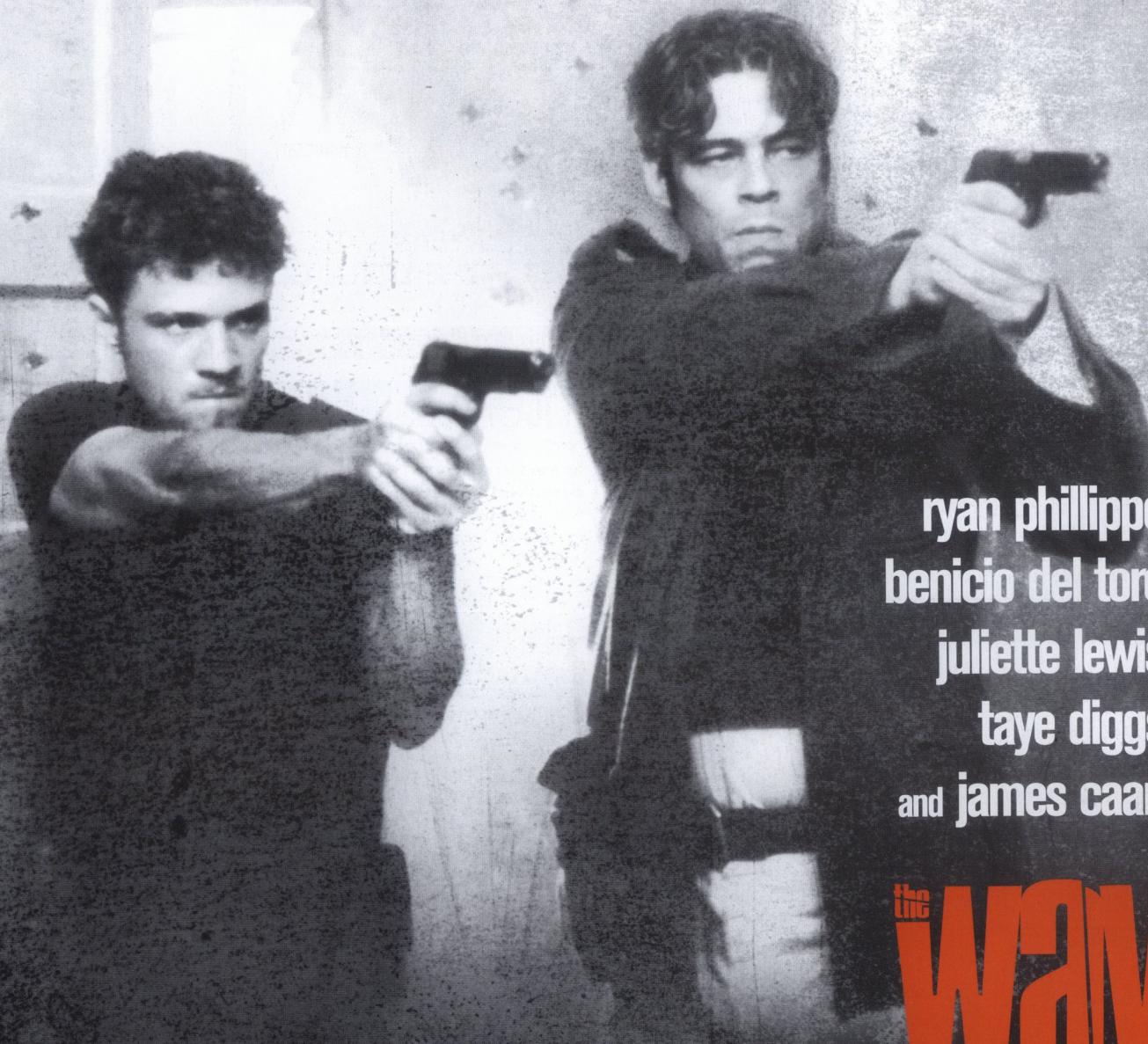
The problem is that it's not the kind of thing you'd buy if you were after a cutting-edge beat 'em up – it's just too old hat for that. All three games remain good for the odd twiddle, and it's always nice to see the grandparents of the modern beat 'em up in action. A history lesson. ■ AB

OFFICIAL UK
PlayStation
Magazine
VERDICT
IN OPM45 7/10

TODAY'S SCORE
Old-fashioned in
execution, but worth
a look for die-hard
SF fans

6
OUT OF 10

from the academy award-winning writer of 'the usual suspects'



ryan phillippe
benicio del toro
juliette lewis
taye diggs
and james caan

the Way of the Gun



"BLOODY MARVELLOUS."

*Everything you expect from a good action film
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artisan entertainment presents an aqaba production. ryan phillippe benicio del toro 'the way of the gun' juliette lewis taye diggs
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music by joe kraemer production designer maia javan director of photography dick pope editor stephen semel
made by christopher mcquarrie producer russ markowitz produced by kenneth kokin

written and directed by christopher mcquarrie

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ARTISAN

momentum

18

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WORDS: Kieron Gillen / Steve Owen

MEDIA

CD/DVD/NET/COIN-OP

REVIEWS

OPM'S ROUND-UP OF THE MONTH'S BEST NEW RELEASES

CDS OF THE MONTH

>>Kid A is out now<<

RADIOHEAD

Kid A

As you might have heard, the long-awaited fourth Radiohead album isn't exactly large on tunes. Don't expect to hear your milkman whistling any of the tracks, unless you have a particularly avant-garde cow-juice provider. Guitars are jettisoned in favour of blurred synths, Thom's forced falsetto completely obscures his lyrics and, well, it's all more pretentious than ever.

Not to say that there aren't quietly moving moments. The likes of *Idioteque*'s death-disco and *Morning Bell*'s paranoid heart are effective mood-evokers for listening alone, and the heavenly cascade that is *Motion Picture Soundtrack* will chart post-midnight lonely drinking sessions perfectly.

Not recommended, but not reviled either. KG

Verdict: Not on the radio, matey 6/10



>>Out now<<

VARIOUS

The Best Garage Anthems... Ever! Cynics might argue that a genre passes from interesting cultural phenomenon to tawdry media-freak show when a 'Best...' Ever! compilation shows its sorry face. But hey, who cares about cynics? Let's get dressed in designer labels, down champagne and go out. For the dilettante, this is the chance to accumulate all those powerful pop-singles and the occasional interesting track without wading into the swamp of specialist vinyl-shops. Special mention must be made of the grin-elixir that is DJ Dee-Kline's novelty, *I Don't Smoke*. So, expect Sweet Female Attitude's *Flowers*, Craig David's *Re-Re Wind*. It's all as shallow as a mono-molecular pool of I'm-Bru, and just as sweet. KG

Verdict: And the crowd say... 7/10



>>Out now<<

GARY NUMAN

Pure

Private flight-enthusiast Gazza Numan has undergone something of a reappraisal in recent years, due to the self-outing of people like Nine-Inch-Nail head-honcho Trent Reznor as fans. Perhaps hoping the recommendation will pick up some sales, Herr Numan sets off to closely mimic early-NIN's Depeche-Mode-styled electro-rock. Except worse. Lyrically, he seems to be unsure whether he's more annoyed with women (*Pure*) or Big-Bearded-Bloke In The Sky (*Listen To My Voice*). He should save his disapproval for his own pomp-ridden sludge of a record. Don't worry about not buying it - we'll almost certainly see seminal classic *Cars* included in a million and one future racing games. KG

Verdict: No-Nu-Numan 3/10



>>Out now<<

COCTEAU TWINS

Stars And Topsoil: A Collection (1982-1990)

"She's forgotten the words," was the phrase most tossed out by unhelpful parents when presented with the Cocteau Twins. The lyrics, sang almost completely in a language of their own devising, revelled in the abstract. While their Cathedral-Of-Dream dust, echo-pedal-heavy sound is as '80s as, say, Belinda Carlisle, *Stars And Topsoil* still enchants like a sugar-lullaby. Critics have been throwing words like "angelic" and "child-like" at Elizabeth Fraser's vocals for forever and a day, and they still ring true. As good as evidence as *Grosse Pointe Blank*'s soundtrack that the '80s weren't the cultural vacuum that communal memories would have them be. KG

Verdict: Shining 8/10



>>Out now<<

LLAMA FARMERS

El Toppo

Appearing at the same time as *Idlewild*, the Llama Farmers' neo-grunge has always seemed a painful embarrassment to the nation. Having a vocalist whose only desire seemed to be to ape the mannerisms of Gavin Rossdale didn't help, but their Pixies-meets-Nirvana stew of influences were major audience-repellors. They were terrible. And now they're not. Da Farmers have turned their compass toward 'tender'. Incredibly, no obvious Bushisms remain, with the vocals even occasionally approaching a bruised sentimentality. While the mellow melodic makeover clearly suits, there's still something workman-like about the album. But still, this is a genuine improvement. KG

Verdict: El Okay-o 5/10

WEBWATCH

More nuttiness from the magical Interweb

This one's good for a laugh. The Bell Labs Text-To-Speech Synthesiser (www.bell-labs.com/project/tts/voices.html) does just that. Simply type in a message, press the Synthesise button and - KaPowww! - your words are spoken out loud in your choice of vocal style - including Big Man, Rasp, Ridiculous and, er, Gnat. It's a great way to keep friends and colleagues on their toes: we e-mailed our staff writer a little reminder that it was his turn to make the tea. Sadly, we'd forgotten how bad a Lee Hall brew actually is...

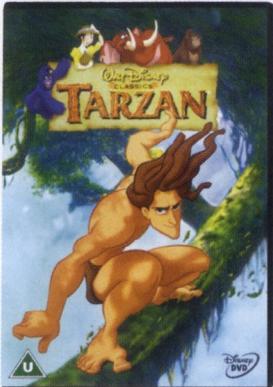


If single-surfing's more your bag, then point your browser to www.ezone.com, where you'll find a host of free online Shockwave games. Try your hand at an epic adventure such as *Lenny Loosejocks In Cane Toad Explosion*, where you guide the eponymous amphibian-killer's pick-up truck over as many toads as possible. Not enough action for you? Then you should give *Santa Goes Butt-Boardin'* a whirl too. And then there's that all-time classic, *Fat Boy And The Cookie Vault*. The games industry at large could learn a thing or two from this Web site. Or perhaps not.



Al Bickham, more than just a man. He's a biker

DVDS OF THE MONTH

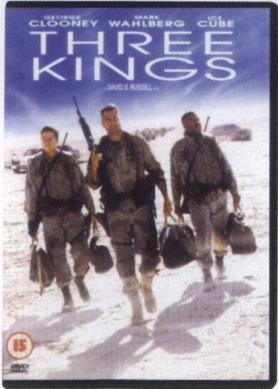


>>Out now>>

TARZAN: COLLECTOR'S EDITION

While Disney cartoons tend to mix humour and slush in equal measure, *Tarzan* stands out as one of the best of recent years, the funnies generally outweighing the sentimentalism. Tony Goldwyn and Minnie Driver voice this retelling of the Edgar Rice Burroughs story, which is also mercifully free of pointless musical numbers. Apart from the opening ten-minute number, which compresses the background story of how *Tarzan* came to be, Phil Collins' songs are gratingly average, but that's only to be expected. On the whole, *Tarzan* is traditionally animated, although purists will be upset that it's the CGI work that makes this film so thrilling. Swing with the ape-man. **SO**

Extras: A second full DVD
Verdict: It Tarzan, you know **9/10**

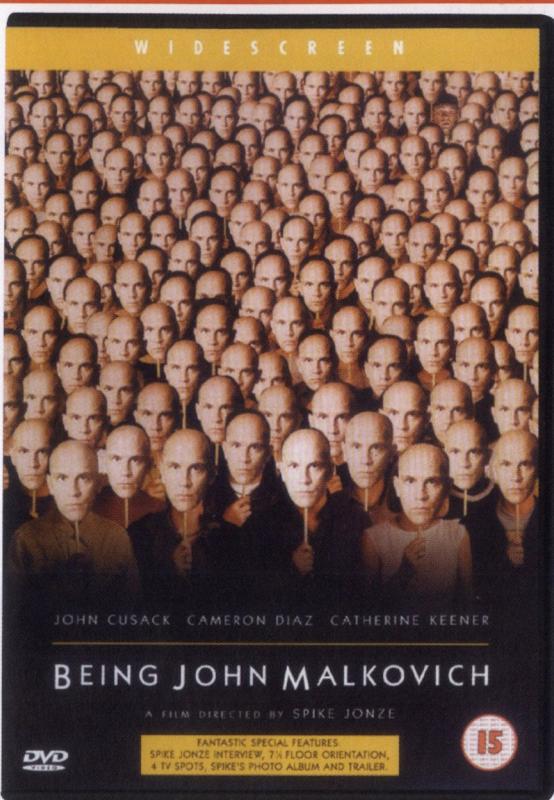


>>Out now>>

THREE KINGS

Dangerous and brave, this has the look of a low-budget film unexpectedly blessed with money after the arrival on set of George Clooney and Marky Mark Wahlberg. If you thought this was just an army action film, you'll be surprised to learn that it's actually a deeply thoughtful morality tale set at the end of Desert Storm. Politically adept, grainily filmed and challenging it certainly is, but it's also funny, well-made and extremely watchable. The line between right and wrong is blurred from the outset, which may not be to everyone's taste, but if Hollywood is getting a bit too samey for you, *Three Kings* might just give you faith. **SO**

Extras: Documentaries, commentary, photos, storyboard
Verdict: Not your average Clooney flick **8/10**



>>Being John Malkovich is out now>>

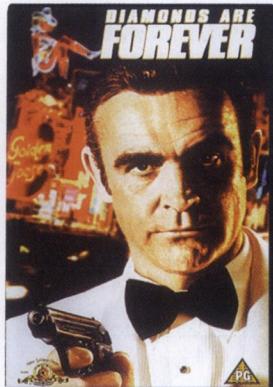
BEING JOHN MALKOVICH

An unsuccessful street puppeteer, Craig Schwartz (John Cusack) decides to take a day job. Behind a filing cabinet in his bizarre office midway between floors seven and eight, Schwartz discovers a portal that puts the user inside the head of John Malkovich for 15 minutes. A unique business opportunity if ever one presented itself...

Rather more difficult to describe than to heap with praise, *Being John Malkovich* has to be the year's best film. Wonderfully cast, imaginatively shot and belly-achingly hilarious (in satisfying 'aren't we clever to be able to appreciate this?' style rather than the everyday simplicity of, say, *Scary Movie*). It's got the lot: love, sadness, despair, treachery, revenge and a great comedy foil in the titular actor. **SO**

Extras: Widescreen, interviews, notes, documentaries, photos
Verdict: Brilliantly weird **9/10**

"Has to be the year's best film. Wonderfully cast, imaginatively shot and belly-achingly hilarious"

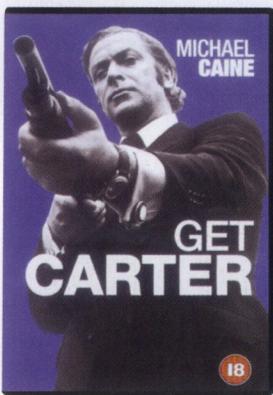


>>Out now>>

DIAMONDS ARE FOREVER

Predating Roger Moore's rather cornical stab at Bond, *Diamonds Are Forever* marked the timely return of Sean Connery following the wonderfully scripted but shakily executed *On Her Majesty's Secret Service*. When the British Government suspect the existence of a global diamond-smuggling operation, Agent 007 is called in to investigate. He is sent to Las Vegas, where he uncovers yet another attempt by arch-enemy Blofeld to hold the world to ransom.

For 30 smackers, you might prefer to buy the double pack and get the truly excellent *Live And Let Die*, Roger Moore's first and best Bond film... **SO**
Extras: Documentaries aplenty – fabulous
Verdict: Sean Connery looking older but still cutting it **8/10**



>>Out now>>

GET CARTER

Jack Carter (Michael Caine) is the epitome of the British anti-hero. The London gangster travels to Newcastle for his brother's funeral where, after finding out that the cause of death was murder, he sets out to exact some revenge. Juicy scripted and played, and shot in menacing gloom, this 1971 classic is being re-released ahead of the Los Angeles-set Sylvester Stallone remake (*Tsk*). *Get Carter* has aged better than most films of its vintage, and if it doesn't seem wholly remarkable or original today, remember that that's because *Lock, Stock* shamelessly nicked director Mike Hodges' vision. Damn easy to watch again. **SO**

Extras: Audio commentary, behind-the-scenes documentary
Verdict: A little old-fashioned but still scary **7/10**

QUIDS IN

The latest coin-ops from planet arcade

Konami has carved a reputation for itself as one of the wackier arcade game publishers of recent times. Not difficult, some might argue, given the slew of uninspired driving, shooting and fighting titles put out by the usual suspects this year. Pitted against these has been Konami's array of musical offerings, which seem particularly appealing to the fun-loving Japanese. We more reserved UK gamers haven't embraced the concept quite so readily, however, so Konami has turned to a lower common denominator to woo the Brit Pack – violence.



Punch Mania challenges players to don a pair of gloves and hit six randomly emerging pads in sequence. Timing, rather than power, is all-important, since the pads must be struck only when lit, rather than in indiscriminate fury. The task is tenuously linked to the brave quest of our hero, Kenshiro, who has to vanquish a variety of foes as he progresses through the game's six stages.

The narrative introductions that accompany each bout are particularly entertaining, if confusing: the setting moves from ancient China to an apocalyptic 21st century ravaged by nuclear war. And the posturing of Kenshiro's opponents is first-rate, matched only by the satisfying retorts he gets to make with each defeat.

Throughout it all, Kenshiro stands firm, despite the goading of his enemy, Shin. During the bout itself, your attention is diverted from the screen and on to the rapidly emerging pads. Which is just as well, since the on-screen graphics are fairly primitive. That said, the action is absorbing, and it certainly makes for an appealing spectator sport. For all Konami's attempts to present *Punch Mania* as a noble, tactical game about ancient honour, it's ultimately an excuse to smack a series of pads as hard and as quickly as possible. But where's the harm in that?

Guy Woodward edits
AB Europe (www.ab-europe.co.uk)

OPM VERSUS...

SIR ALEX FERGUSON

PLAYSTATION GAMERS GET A MANAGERIAL MASTERCLASS FROM THE WORLD'S MOST SUCCESSFUL CLUB COACH

Words: Lee Hall Pictures: John Shard

Padding down the spiral staircase of Manchester United's Carrington training ground comes the most successful British manager of the modern era. Dressed head to toe in the diamonds of club sponsor Umbro he takes a seat, showing-off his logo-laden flip-flops.

Sir Alex Ferguson, a man whose steely leadership has brought countless trophies to Old Trafford, takes a seat and, to make sure we know he's not out of his league with OPM, gestures to an attending press officer, "My son Jason here is very into videogames - he plays every night." As the questions come Ferguson junior occasionally leans over to whisper a word of instruction in the old man's ear.

Thus bolstered, the Man Utd manager - who has put his name to this year's instalment of 3DO's excellent *Player Manager* series - settles down to tell OPM how to be the man in charge. Ferguson has 25 years of managerial experience under his belt and believes he has much advice to offer budding PlayStation managers. "Everyone thinks they'd like to be a manager, particularly players. This is their chance..."

Before he launches into his managerial masterclass he notes

the irony of Gianluca Vialli's situation, a man who signed a PC game deal just weeks before his unexpected sacking as Chelsea manager. It epitomises, he tells us, the unpredictability of management. "In the space of a few days he went from being a great manager to a bad manager," he squawks, eyes widening with incredulity.

For Ferguson, the art of management is less mysterious than it seems, and closely resembles its videogame incarnation. "You can certainly recreate a real-life situation in the game," he says. "Say you're looking for a wide right player. There's really six or seven things you're looking for - attitude, character, ability, speed and stamina, for example. The game embraces all of those."

"The statistical breakdown of performances and the strengths of other teams in the game is similar to our system of monitoring the opposition and a crucial tool for success on the field," he explains. "We assess a team over three games. In Europe we watch every game we possibly can. You have a dossier of information. Something you should recreate when playing the game too if you want to be serious." Preparation is crucial, he says, warming to his theme, but you must be adept at analysing the



Fergy sees PM2001 as, "your chance" to prove you can be a manager

"If I chose a player to build a team around I'd look at Edgar Davids"

impact of formations on your style of play.

This research culture is fundamental to the modern game, he says, and nowhere is it more important than when you are signing players. "We know a lot about them before they sign and look into things such as their background, injury history and their basic character, but you never know how a player reacts to joining a big club like Manchester United." Ferguson has recently looked to Europe in his quest for top talent, and is clearly an aficionado of the European game. For Manchester United, the Champions League is their prime focus, so Ferguson's preoccupation with the continent comes as no surprise.

It is European-based managers that he respects most too, singling out those who have "broken the rules of

management" as the men gamers should aspire to emulate. He admires Italian coach Marcello Lippi - recently sacked by Inter Milan - for "changing the concept of the Italian mentality". Indeed Lippi introduced a policy of playing three up front at Juventus and proceeded to win the European Cup. Who else does Ferguson - often associated with a rigid work ethic - rate highly? "Louis Van Gaal [the new Holland manager] is a great coach," he purrs. Van Gaal's sides are always strong counter-attacking teams. Is Ferguson's recognition of Van Gaal, and his use of pacey flair players such as Ryan Giggs, an indication that this is a tactic gamers should embrace? His smile says, "Well, it works for us."

According to the man himself the techniques you need to win titles in *Player*

Manager 2001 are much the same as he applies in real life. "If I chose a player in the game to build a team around I'd look at Davids. He's got an appetite to play, presence in big game situations, confidence in himself. He isn't fazed by anything and he's a fighter. Things like that can spread in a team."

However, any fool can pick a European dream team, the game's most ardent time-keeper explains, it's getting the blend to form a good combination that counts. A conglomerate of stars often makes for disquiet in the camp and in *Player Manager 2001* you are made aware of the mood of the players, who will whinge, for example, if your training regimes lack variety. How much motivation comes from the players, and how much must the coaching staff and manager



Fergy snubs Toon. So it's up to you to save them

Sir Alex Ferguson

"The problem is when you get players that won't, or can't, be lead"

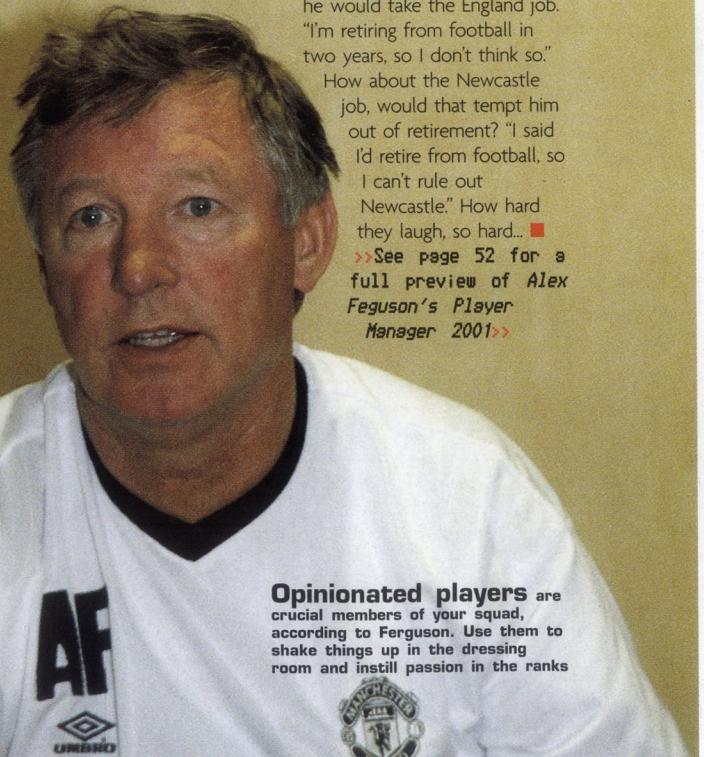
impose? "It depends on the player," Ferguson begins, "some are born with an inherent desire to win, others prepare themselves well. Some don't reach the high standards of others." Clearly such players have existed within the Manchester United set up, though not for long we suspect. "The problem is when you get players that won't, or can't, be lead. These players have a problem." Presumably their first problem at Man Utd is finding another club.

What of the players who do make it into the line-up? More often than not his side is leading at half-time, so Sir Alex could be excused for supping a cup of tea with his players, couldn't he? He adopts a

patriarchal tone to explain, "There's always a part in every football match, even if it's been a great first half, where you can say to the players - 'watch out for this'. Half time is very important." Had he ever lost his temper with a player? "Several times." He smiles, no doubt conscious of his hard media image, qualifying his statement by suggesting, "It's been a while - I'm mellowing now. The funny thing is, when I was a player it was the players who nagged each other. A manager's job was to encourage the lads and say a few words to them. The preparation of coaches is light years ahead now."

Suddenly the session is cut short with a call for one last question. OPM asks Ferguson if he would take the England job. "I'm retiring from football in two years, so I don't think so."

How about the Newcastle job, would that tempt him out of retirement? "I said I'd retire from football, so I can't rule out Newcastle." How hard they laugh, so hard... ■
»See page 52 for a full preview of *Alex Ferguson's Player Manager 2001*»



Opinionated players are crucial members of your squad, according to Ferguson. Use them to shake things up in the dressing room and instill passion in the ranks



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WIN THIS!

BOOTY

THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS A FREE LUNCH, THAT'S FOR SURE, BUT THERE IS SUCH A THING AS A GREAT BIG BONANZA GIVEAWAY AND ITS NAME IS BOOTY. GET DIALLING

Mille Miglia

We've got ten copies of driving game *Mille Miglia* to give away. See the box on the right to find out how you can get your hands on one.

EA Goody Bags

Calling all sports fans, we've got ten of these goody bags up for grabs from the master of sport games - EA. Each contains a sports towel, drink bottle and shorts.

WWF Figures

Many would sweat blood and tears for a go at this prize - two of these Tuff Talkin' WWF figures.

Spider-Man

Everybody's favourite superhero has made it to PlayStation and ten lucky readers can win a copy of the game, courtesy of Activision.

Final Fantasy VIII

This *Final Fantasy VIII* limited edition box set is a must for all FF completists. But only one can win...

TOCA Fleeces

As winter draws in, we're all feeling the need to wrap up warm, so get cosy with a limited-edition TOCA fleece.

MATCH THE SYMBOLS TO SEE WHAT BOOTY BONUS YOU COULD WIN...

MILLE MIGLIA

To win one of ten copies of *Mille Miglia* call 09013 882246 between 1/11/00 and 28/11/00 with the correct number:

In what country is the Mille Miglia race held?

1. Italy
2. Spain
3. France

Calls cost 25p (less than the price of a stamp). Check with the bill-payer before calling. See rules on page 161.



EA GOODY BAGS

To win one of ten goodie bags call 09013 882247 between 1/11/00 and 28/11/00 with the correct number:

Who does David Beckham play for?

1. Manchester United
2. Newcastle United
3. Spice United



SPIDER-MAN

To win one of ten copies of *Spider-Man* call 09013 882248 between 1/11/00 and 29/11/00 with the correct number:

What name is given to the fear of spiders?

1. Arachnophobia
2. Hydrophobia
3. Spideyphobia

Calls cost 25p (less than the price of a stamp). Check with the bill-payer before calling. See rules on page 161.



TOCA FLEECES

To win one of five fleeces call 09013 882249 between 1/11/00 and 28/11/00 with the correct number:

What is the latest TOCA game called?

1. TOCA Touring Cars
2. TOCA World Touring Cars
3. TOCA Touring Car Championship

Calls cost 25p (less than the price of a stamp). Check with the bill-payer before calling. See rules on page 161.



Thanks to everyone who helped with these prizes: Infogrames, Sony, Rocket, Konami, EA and Emma and Penny at Norton & Co

WIN ALL THIS!

Fancy getting your hands on this massive pile of gaming goodies? Just answer the following WWF-related question.

Which WWF wrestler appears on Wyclef Jean's single *It Doesn't Matter*?

- 1) Mr Ass
- 2) The Rock
- 3) The Undertaker

To win call 09013 882250 between 1/11/00 and 28/11/00 with the correct number.

Note: You must call between 1/11/2000 and 28/11/2000. All calls cost 25p (less than the price of a stamp). Check with the bill-payer before calling. No purchase necessary. Usual rules apply (see page 161). All winners drawn at random.

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CD 61: Destruction Derby Raw, Star Trek Invasion, Silent Bomber, MoHo, Vib Ribbon, Grind Session, Tenchu 2, Galerians and more



CD 62: Spider-Man, Tenchu 2, Rayman 2, TOCA WTC, Disney World Racing, X-Men, Re-Volt 2, Mille Miglia, Sydney 2000, Infestation and more



CD 63: Sydney 2000, Grind Session, Dave Mirra, Mr Driller, Terracon, Formula One 2000, Driver 2, Superman, LMA Manager 2001 and more



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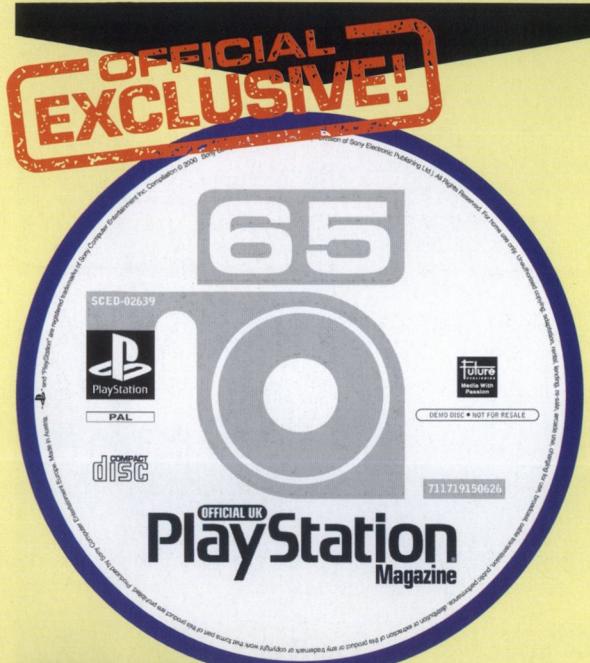
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EDITED BY: Catherine Channon

Comments, queries and blather to catherine.channon@futurenet.co.uk or fax us on 01225 732291. Sorry, we are unable to answer your queries over the phone

The festive season approaches and new titles are flowing in thick and fast. Just look at the line-up on this month's disc for proof. Crash and Spyro are making their annual appearance, alongside *Jungle Book Groove Party* and *This Is Football 2*. There's the long-overdue *Prince Naseem Boxing* and the chance for car-to-car contact in *TOCA World Touring Cars*. Finally, don't miss the rolling demos: *The World Is Not Enough*, *Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX*, *Muppet Monster Adventure*... the list goes on.

Catherine Channon

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Load the disc and scroll through the game choices using ← and →. Press ⓧ to select the demo you want. At the end of some of the demos you will need to reset your console

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Never a drag. Beware the spinning octopus and the gun-toting rhynocs. You'll need to defeat them all in order to receive the next dragon

Spyro 3



■ PUBLISHER	SCEE
■ GENRE	3D platform adventure
■ PROGRAM	Playable demo

The little purple fire-breather is back. A bunch of dragon eggs have gone missing and it's up to you, playing the part of our hero, to get them back. The demo offers three levels: Skate Park, Molten Crater and Seashell Shore. Defeat the enemies using your flame or charge attack, pick up the gems, talk to everybody, and complete the tasks to collect the eggs. Following you around is Sparx The Dragonfly – he represents your health (boost your health by eating butterflies, and other small creatures).

■ Controls

↑↓←→ Move left/right/forward/back
Ⓐ Flame attack/spit object

- Ⓐ Charge/ram attack
- Ⓑ Headbush
- Ⓒ Jump
- Ⓓ Glide
- Ⓐ Ⓑ Ⓒ Ⓓ Glide, hover and land

As Sgt Byrd:

- Ⓐ Dive underwater
- Ⓑ Paddle underwater
- Ⓐ ↑↓ To jump on and move on ladders

■ Additional features

You'll be able to enjoy various mini-games, and play the part of other animals.

■ Further Information

To find out why Spyro is one of PlayStation's star performers, check out our review on page 114.



CD CHALLENGE!

Win this...

To get your mitts on one of five copies of *Spyro 3 Year Of The Dragon*, simply tell us where Spyro lives. Is it: 1. Glimmer, 2. Shimmer or, 3. Glamour? Call 0903 88226 between 1/11/2000 and 28/11/2000 with the correct number.

DISCONTENTS



Crash, bang, wallop, what a picture. The latest *Crash* instalment is more bizarre than ever. Pick up your pad to find out more

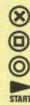
Crash Bash

■ DEVELOPER	SCEE
■ GENRE	Party game
■ PROGRAM	Playable demo

Designed to be a full-on multiplayer fest, *Crash Bash* is a huge melting pot of a title, amalgamating just about every gaming genre you could possibly think of. Our demo gives you the opportunity to try out the Polar Panic and Pogo Painter in both Adventure Mode and Battle Mode. In Adventure Mode complete the Crystal Challenge and you'll get through to Pogo A GoGo if you finish all the other levels available.

■ Controls

↑↓↔→ Move left/right/forward/back



Jump
Attack other players
Pick up/throw crates
Pause game

■ Additional features

The full game includes a multiplayer Battle Mode, a single or two-player Adventure Mode (which takes you through 22 arenas and four bosses). Plus jousting, pogo, air hockey, a tank game, crate tossing, and racing mini-games – to name but a few.

■ Further Information

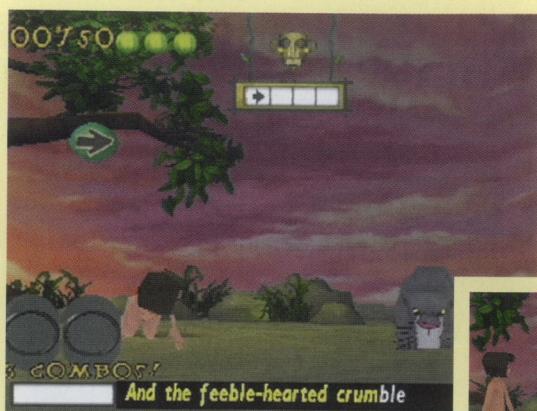
Ruffle further through the bandicoot's fur in this month's preview on page 46, and keep an eye out for the review in next month's OPM.



CD CHALLENGE!

■ Win this...

To win one of five copies of the game, tell us how many *Crash* games there have been (including this one): 1. Four 2. Five 3. Six? Call 09013 882267 between 1/11/00 and 28/11/00 with the correct number.



In the jungle, the mighty jungle... Mowgli awwem-aways while the lion is kept up by the all-night rave



Jungle Book Groove Party

■ PUBLISHER	SCEE
■ GENRE	Dancing game
■ PROGRAM	Playable demo

from Easy to Crazy. Unless you have the manual dexterity of a concert pianist, you might want to start with easy.

■ Controls

On screen

■ Additional features

The full game features all your favourite *Jungle Book* characters, including King Louie, Shere Khan and Baloo.

■ Further Information

Bump and grind your way over to page 126 of this issue where *Jungle Book Groove Party* gets reviewed.



CD CHALLENGE!

■ Win this...

To win one of five copies of this game, tell us what kind of animal Baloo is: 1. Bear 2. Beaver 3. Buffalo? Call 09013 882268 between 1/11/00 and 28/11/00 with the right number.

This Is Football 2

■ PUBLISHER	SCEE
■ GENRE	Football sim
■ PROGRAM	Playable demo

We've managed to get hold of a teaser demo from the second instalment in SCE's football series. Screw in your studs and prepare to play as either England or Brazil on your own or with a mate. It's a game of two halves, so it's probably best to play both of them.



CD CHALLENGE!

■ Controls

- ↑↓↔ Move player
- ◎ Shoot (tap for low shot, hold for high shot)
- Volley/header
- × Overhead shot/short pass
- ×× One-two
- Give and go (press once and hold – the receiving player will execute a return pass when × is released)

■ Win this...

To win one of five copies of the game, tell us who won Euro 2000. Was it: 1. Spain 2. Germany 3. France? Then phone 09013 882269 between 1/11/00 and 28/11/00 with the right number.

○

Long pass

△

Sprint (repeated tap)/Knock ahead

L1

Spin feint

L2

Shimmy with knock ahead

R1

Special Mode

R2

Shimmy with close control

Additional features

The complete game features full match commentary as well as a massive range of cup and league competitions from around the world.

Further Information

Kick about with *This Is Football 2* in this month's review on page 110.



It's only a two-minute quick match, so be sure to make the most of it

Prince Naseem Boxing

■ PUBLISHER	Codemasters
■ GENRE	Boxing sim
■ PROGRAM	Playable demo

Proof positive of Naz's arrival on PlayStation is this playable demo in which you can choose to fight as Naz or Slick Daddy in a three-round,



CD CHALLENGE!

single or two-player fight. Seconds away round one...

■ Controls

- ↑↓↔ Move boxer
- R1 L1 Dodge left/right
- Jab

■ Win this...

To win one of five copies of the game, tell us which of these is a real boxer: 1. Dan Mayers 2. Lennox Lewis 3. Mark Donald? Call 09013 882270 between 1/11/00 and 28/11/00 with the correct number.

○

Hook

×

Uppercut

△

Cross

■ Additional features

The full game features 16 international boxers, in 16 global locations.

■ Further information

To find out more about *Prince Naseem Boxing*, go a few rounds with this month's review on page 130.



The Vs Mode is the only one available in the demo, but the finished game offers a lot more options, including a World Mode where you can select one of 90 boxers to train and mould into a fighting animal

TOCA World Touring Cars

■ PUBLISHER	Codemasters
■ GENRE	Rally sim
■ PROGRAM	Playable demo

You may think there's something strangely familiar about this demo, and rightly so. It first appeared on the OPM62 cover disc but without its Time Trial Mode. So, to make sure that no one has missed out, here's the demo in its entirety. It includes both the Free Race at Hockenheim and the elusive Time Trial on the Catalunya circuit.



CD CHALLENGE!

■ Controls

- ×
 - (or right Analog)
 -
 - △
 - R1
 - R2
 - L1
 - L2
 - START
 - ↑↓↔ (or left Analog)
- Accelerate
 - Brake
 - Handbrake
 - Change camera
 - Rear view
 - Change gear up
 - Damage detector
 - Change down gear
 - Pause
 - Steer car

■ Win this...

To win one of five copies of the game tell us which car used Steve McQueen in his ads 1. Focus 2. Puma 3. Robin? Call 09013 882271 between 1/11/00 and 28/11/00 with the correct number.

■ Additional features

As you'd expect, the TOCA licence brings with it authentic liveries, driver names, and competition rules.

■ Further information

Prepare for non-stop racing excitement in OPM's full review of *TOCA WTC* – issue 62.



Hockenheim hosts the Free Race, and the Time Trial is set on the Catalunya circuit

DISCONTENTS

Muppet Monster Adventure

■ PUBLISHER	SCEE
■ GENRE	Platformer
■ PROGRAM	Rolling demo

There seems to have been something of a *Muppet* revival of late, this being the second game to feature Henson's cuties characters in as many months. It would seem that SCEE is certainly making the most of its licence...

Muppet Monster Adventure casts you as Robin, Kermit The Frog's cute nephew, as he attempts to save his uncle and the other Muppets who have been transformed into monster versions of

themselves – Kermit is a Frankenstein's Monster, Gonzo is Count Gonzola, Fozzie is a Bearwolf, Miss Piggy is the Bride Of Frankenstein.

Starting with a number of special powers (gliding, climbing, and pulling), you must make your way around the *Spyro*-esque, fairy-tale environment. En-route you'll encounter numerous familiar faces from the TV show, including Gonzo, Fozzie and Beeker.

Our rolling demo gives you a sneaky peek at all of this and some of the other levels and challenges you'll face in the complete game.

Video Gallery

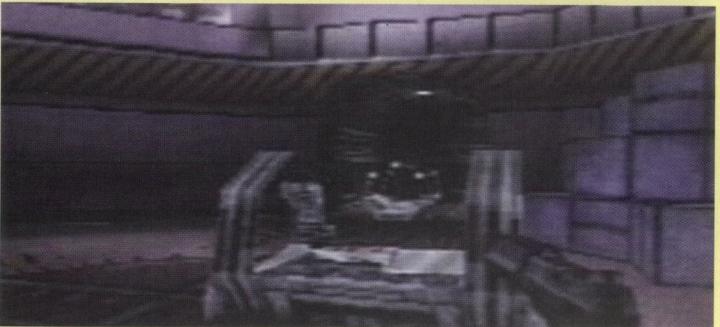
OPM'S REGULAR
LOOK AT FOOTAGE
OF TOMORROW'S
GAMES



The frog chorus. Cute little Robin is out to save uncle Kermit and the rest of the muppets, even Miss Piggy



It's a dark, dark world where dark, dark things happen. Be sure to eat a whole bag of carrots before trying to watch this demo



Bondage. Ol' smoothy returns to the little grey box promising much more than the very poor *Tomorrow Never Dies*. Have a look for yourself with our exclusive rolling demo

Koudelka

■ PUBLISHER	Infogrames
■ GENRE	RPG
■ PROGRAM	Rolling demo

From the same development team that worked on the *Final Fantasy* series comes *Koudelka*. A gothic horror RPG, its spooky storylines and scary setting are distinctly reminiscent of *Silent Hill*.

The game follows the adventures of Koudelka Lasant, a young psychic banished from her home town by

misunderstanding locals. She finds herself being led to a monastery in Wales by the voice of a ghost. There she encounters all kinds of calamities that incorporate, puzzle-solving, strategy and turn-based battle elements. While fighting, you're given control of either Koudelka or one of the other two characters that are accompanying her on her quest, so you'll have to use your head too.

A kind of cross between *Final Fantasy* and *Resident Evil*, *Koudelka*'s sure to draw you in and terrify you once you're there.

The World Is Not Enough

■ PUBLISHER	EA
■ GENRE	First person shoot 'em up
■ PROGRAM	Rolling demo

Aha ha ha. We meet again, Mr Bond. As the second Bond game to be released from EA Headquarters, OPM had been hoping for something very different, something with an edge, something... better. And by the look of things so far, we're not going to be disappointed.

Developer Black Ops was given more time and greater freedom in the creation

of this title, resulting in a game far more worthy of its licence.

The change from third to first-person perspective brings your dreams a little closer to reality as you begin to feel that you really are James Bond. Just don't try any of the lines in real life, and remember you're only licensed to kill in the game.

This is a real teaser of a demo, so if you want to find out more about the game, be sure to keep an eye out for more information in future issues of the magazine. Maybe even next issue.

TOP SECRET
EXTRA

Monster Rancher

■ PUBLISHER	SCEE
■ GENRE	Monster collecting game
■ PROGRAM	Rolling demo

Monster Rancher is a mix of Tamagotchi, Pokémon and Barcode Battlers. That may sound like a rather unusual combination, but *Monster Rancher* is a rather unusual game. In the same way that you start *Vib Ribbon*, you load up *Monster Rancher*, take it out and put in the music CD of

your choice. Select a track, and you'll be presented with a musically generated monster created from the bowels of your CD collection. There are over 400 basic varieties available, each with different attributes. You'll need to find the best track to generate the most suitable monster for the fighting that ensues. Once you've selected your beast, you can train and love him as your very own. Our rolling demo contains some of the developer's favourites creations.



This is what listening to Westlife can do to you - you've been warned

HOW TO USE OUR DOWNLOAD CHEATS

Stick an official Memory Card in your PlayStation and pop in the demo. Select Download from the main menu using **X** and scroll through the saves using **↑** and **↓**. Press **X** to select the save and it will be stored on your Memory Card. Use these cheats on the full copies of your games

O PM's Download - dear to all cheatin' hearts. Just copy the sneakiness on to your Memory Card and away you go...

Silent Hill

The game's been completed once so you'll now be able to play in Next Fear Mode. You are in the hospital and have the Katana.

Kurushi

You get one extra character to play with - Cherry.

Wip3out

The complete game, with all tournaments, tracks, classes, and ships.



**HOLD ON TIGHT,
HE'S NOW ON DVD.**

AVAILABLE INDIVIDUALLY
OR IN SPECIAL EDITION BOXSET
FROM 13TH NOVEMBER

RAMBO
d v d t r i l o g y

18



A

ACTION BASS

Take 2 – OPM64 – 2/10 – Fishing game
Fishing isn't a promising subject for a game but any way you look at it Action Bass is poor

ACTION MAN MISSION XTREME

Hasbro – OPM54 – 6/10 – Adventure/shoot 'em up
Diverting while it lasts, but disappointingly lightweight. You've given far too many clues.

ACTUA GOLF

Gremlin – OPM9 – 8/10 – Golf sim
Decent player animation and varied commentary are combined to good effect.

ACTUA GOLF 2

Gremlin – OPM22 – 7/10 – Golf sim
Better graphics and new shots fail to hide basic gameplay limitations.

ACTUA GOLF 3

Gremlin – OPM40 – 6/10 – Golf sim
For the dedicated golf fan only. Dated control system and old-fashioned looks.

ACTUA ICE HOCKEY

Gremlin – OPM30 – 6/10 – Ice hockey sim
Very ordinary game with slow graphics and many minor niggles. Not bad, but not excellent either.

ACTUA ICE HOCKEY 2

Gremlin – OPM45 – 6/10 – Ice hockey sim
Like playing for real without a helmet. But it's missing one obvious point – the players.

ACTUA SOCCER

Gremlin – OPM3 – 9/10 – Football sim
A slick and accomplished early bash at this overcrowded game genre.

ACTUA SOCCER 2

Gremlin – OPM27 – 9/10 – Football sim
A hard game to master, but still among the best.

ACTUA SOCCER 3

Gremlin – OPM40 – 6/10 – Football sim
Lacks a wide range of moves and fails to convey the flowing nature of the sport.

ACTUA SOCCER CLUB EDITION

Gremlin – OPM20 – 7/10 – Football sim
Basically, Actua Soccer with national rather than international sides.

ADIDAS POWER SOCCER

Psynosis – OPM6 – 8/10 – Football sim
The George Best of footie sims – wild, eccentric, but oh so captivating.

ADIDAS POWER SOCCER 2

Psynosis – OPM28 – 7/10 – Football sim
There are better footie games around, but this has lots of grit and flair.

ADIDAS POWER SOCCER INT

Psynosis – OPM18 – 8/10 – Football sim
New modes and more realistic team and player abilities. Not a lot else.

AGILE WARRIOR

Virgin – OPM3 – 6/10 – Air combat sim
Rough and unpolished flight 'em up with a few redeeming features.

AIR COMBAT

SCEE – OPM1 – 6/10 – Air combat sim
Flashy Namco arcade port that's too short and easy to merit unguarded acclaim.

AIRONAUTS

Red Storm – OPM48 – 4/10 – Shoot 'em up
Bit more thought and this could have been a winner.

AIR RACE

THQ – OPM26 – 7/10 – Racing/flight sim
Pleasantly surprising. It has obvious faults, but is robust, smart and fun-filled despite them.

AIY EVOLUTION GLOBAL

Acclaim – OPM9 – 7/10 – Strategy
Snappily titled Sim-City clone. Deep and challenging, but slow in places.

AKUJITHE HEARTLESS

Eidos – OPM42 – 8/10 – 3D adventure
No-nonsense adventure with an attractive evil sheen.

ALIEN RESURRECTION

Fox Interactive – OPM62 – 8/10 – Shoot 'em up
Not enough adventuring for puzzle-heads, not enough blasting for fragheads. But overall it's class.

ALIEN TRILOGY

Acclaim – OPM5 – 8/10 – Shoot 'em up
Pant-wettingly scary Doom clone with an emphasis on intellect and agility.

ALL STAR TENNIS

Ubisoft Soft – OPM40 – 7/10 – Tennis sim
Entertaining and inventive slice of tennis action, but not recommended for the lone player.

ALL STAR TENNIS 2000

Ubisoft Soft – OPM61 – 6/10 – Tennis sim

It does a good impression of tennis, but is nowhere near polished enough to score highly.

ALONE IN THE DARK

Infogrames – OPM2 – 8/10 – 3D action/adventure
One of the most picturesque and playable adventures.

ALUNDRÀ

Psynosis – OPM31 – 9/10 – RPG

Legend of Zelda for the PlayStation, and not before time. Compulsively addictive.

ALUNDRÀ 2

Activation – OPM62 – 7/10 – Adventure

Could disappoint fans of the original, but persevere and you'll find a game of many delights.

ANNA KOURNIKOVA'S SMASH COURT TENNIS

SCEE – OPM46 – 8/10 – Tennis sim

Its retro look and innate cruelty won't appeal to everyone, but it's an arcade gem. Pure genius.

APÉ ESCAPE

SCEE – OPM47 – 9/10 – 3D platformer

The best platformer released so far – instantly amusing and enjoyable.

B

BALLISTIC

THQ – OPM62 – 6/10 – Puzzler

Frustrating and addictive but doesn't really stand out from competitors.

BARBIE RACE & RIDE

SCEE – OPM56 – 6/10 – Riding sim

Fun but shallow gameplay. That said, £20 for an afternoon of peace and quiet isn't that much.

BASEBALL 2000

Interplay – OPM55 – 5/10 – Baseball sim

Falls into the same mind-numbingly tedious routine as every other attempt at this sport.

BATMAN & ROBIN

Acclaim – OPM35 – 6/10 – Arcade/adventure

There are too many ideas fighting for attention, none of them realised.

BATTLE ARENA TOSHINDEN

SCEE – OPM1 – 8/10 – Beat 'em up

This weapons-based 3D punch up is a key early title which still impresses.

BATTLE ARENA TOSHINDEN 2

SCEE – OPM7 – 7/10 – Beat 'em up

Disappointingly similar sequel which adds little but extra graphical finesse.

BATTLE ARENA TOSHINDEN 3

SCEE – OPM24 – 7/10 – Beat 'em up

Marginaly better than its predecessor but still no contender for the Tekken series.

BATTLETANX: GLOBAL ASSAULT

3DO – OPM59 – 7/10 – Tank-based shooter

Satisfying huge explosions and not a lot else.

Frenzied, if short-lived, fun.

BEATMANIA

Konami – OPM56 – 6/10 – DJ sim

Wannabe Norman Cooks might be intrigued, but if that's the case, go get a set of decks.

BEATMANIA

Konami – OPM56 – 6/10 – DJ sim

Wannabe Norman Cooks might be intrigued, but if that's the case, go get a set of decks.

BRAHMA FORCE

JVC – OPM30 – 7/10 – First-person shoot 'em up

Kileak returns, but despite some clever features, not much real improvement.

BREATH OF FIRE III

Virgin – OPM35 – 8/10 – RPG

Great fun Japanese RPG.

BRIAN LARA CRICKET

Codemasters – OPM39 – 8/10 – Cricket sim

Enjoyable to play and well-executed cricket sim.

BROKEN SWORD II: THE SMOKING MIRROR

SCEE – OPM27 – 9/10 – Graphic adventure

One of the most atmospheric adventure games money can buy.

C

CAESAR'S PALACE

Interplay – OPM55 – 3/10 – Casino sim

Multiplayer amusement, but only if you're desperate.

CARMAGEDDON

SCI – OPM54 – 3/10 – Driving game

No amount of pure pedestrian can cover its faults.

CARNAGE HEART

SCEE – OPM20 – 8/10 – Combat/strategy

Intensely absorbing and addictive, but mentally demanding. Not for everyone.

CASTLEVANIA: SYMPHONY OF THE NIGHT

SCEE – OPM26 – 7/10 – Platform adventure

Playable and vast, but lacks sparkle.

CASTROL HONDA SUPERBIKE RACING

THQ – OPM49 – 6/10 – Motorbike game

Too difficult for a passing fancy, but if you love bikes this might be what you've been looking for.

CASTROL HONDA VTR

Midas – OPM64 – 6/10 – Bike racer

A poor show for a licence that means a lot more now than the publisher is giving credit for.

CHAMPIONSHIP MOTOCROSS

THQ – OPM52 – 7/10 – Motorbike game

While it's hard, it provides the kind of knockabout fun that has been absent from recent racers.

CHASE THE EXPRESS

SCEE – OPM63 – 4/10 – Adventure

More faults than we have space to mention.

CHESSMASTER 2

Mindscape – OPM48 – 8/10 – Chess sim

If you want to play, this is a good starting point.

CIRCUIT BREAKERS

Mindscape – OPM33 – 9/10 – Racing game
Addictive, clever and considered top-down racing.
Best with four players.

CIVILIZATION II

Activision – OPM45 – 9/10 – Strategy
Slow, and at times awkward, but incredibly addictive and involving.

COLIN MCRAE RALLY

Codemasters – OPM35 – 9/10 – Racing sim
Pushes the boundaries of the off-road racer to somewhere near *Gran Turismo*.

COLIN MCRAE RALLY 2.0

Codemasters – OPM57 – 9/10 – Racing sim
Rallying reaches new heights of realism in the best-crafted rally game yet.

COLONY WARS

Psygnosis – OPM26 – 7/10 – 3D space combat
Stunning and well-designed, if you're prepared to make the effort.

COLONY WARS: RED SUN

SCEE – OPM57 – 8/10 – 3D space combat
A superb, cinematic shoot 'em up that's one of the finest examples of its genre.

COLONY WARS – VENGEANCE

Psygnosis – OPM39 – 9/10 – 3D space combat
The best space combat game on the PlayStation. Challenging and compelling.

COMMAND & CONQUER

Virgin – OPM15 – 9/10 – Military strategy
Brilliant conversion of the god-like PC original. Make war, not love.

COMMAND & CONQUER RED ALERT

Virgin – OPM28 – 9/10 – Real-time war game
A mammoth game. A classic. You must own this. Red Alert fans will lap it up, but anyone looking for something new will be disappointed.

CONSTRUCTOR

Acclaim – OPM40 – 8/10 – Management sim
A fine game, but you'll need a mouse to get the best out of it.

COOL BOARDERS 2

SCEE – OPM29 – 8/10 – Snowboarding sim
Detailed sports sim, supercool arcade racer and wish-fulfillment par excellence.

COOL BOARDERS 3

SCEE – OPM40 – 8/10 – Snowboarding sim
Superb rather than sublime. A little more thought and care could have made this indispensable.

COOL BOARDERS 4

SCEE – OPM56 – 7/10 – Snowboarding sim
While it impresses with its graphics, it frustrates with its déjà-vu gameplay.

CRASH BANDICOOT

SCEE – OPM10 – 9/10 – 3D platformer
A big, stylish and engrossing addition to a much abused genre.

CRASH BANDICOOT 2

SCEE – OPM27 – 8/10 – 3D platform game
Less painful than the original, though essentially more of the same. Still, pretty and great fun.

CRASH BANDICOOT 3

SCEE – OPM40 – 9/10 – 3D platform game
Tweaked and updated in all the right areas.

CRASH TEAM RACING

SCEE – OPM53 – 9/10 – Kart racer
Packed with powerslides, top weapons and lots of modes. This is pure karting bliss.

CRICKET 2000

EA – OPM57 – 4/10 – Cricket sim
Limited over cricket in a very limited game that isn't over quick enough.

CRITICAL DEPTH

GTI – OPM29 – 7/10 – Shoot 'em up
A decent enough all-action game.

CRITICOM

Virgin – OPM3 – 7/10 – Beat 'em up
A challenging combat game that only reveals its depths over time.

CROC

EA – OPM25 – 7/10 – 3D platformer
A children's *Tomb Raider* with superb graphics and excellent presentation.

DISCWorld 2: MISSING PRESUMED...

Psygnosis – OPM28 – 7/10 – Graphic adventure
If you're a Pratchett fan buy it now. If not, don't.

CRUSADER NO REMORSE

EA – OPM16 – 7/10 – Arcade adventure
The tricky controls and raw graphics conceal a challenging game.

CRYPT KILLER

Konami – OPM18 – 9/10 – Shoot 'em up
Adequate, but forgettable conversion of an OK-ish arcade shooter.

**DARKLIGHT CONFLICT**

EA – OPM21 – 8/10 – Space shoot 'em up
Satisfying 3D shoot 'em up with a nod to *Elite* and bags of gameplay.

DARKSTALKERS 3

Virgin – OPM45 – 6/10 – Beat 'em up
Will appeal to the hardcore fight fan. Some will find its fantastical nature too strong, though.

DAVE MIRRA FREESTYLE BMX

Acclaim – OPM64 – 8/10 – Bike sim
There's plenty of fun to be had here. Among the better extreme sports offerings.

DEAD BALL ZONE

GTI – OPM33 – 6/10 – Future sports
A decent playable future sports game at last, but not as good as the 16-bit classic, *Speedball*.

DEAD OR ALIVE

SCEE – OPM34 – 8/10 – 3D beat 'em up
Lots of polish and gameplay. Still secondary to *Tekken 3* and *Soul Blade*, though.

DEATHTRAP DUNGEON

Eidos – OPM31 – 8/10 – 3D adventure
Hardly a *Tomb Raider* beater, but a solid and well-designed 3D romp.

DEFCON 5

SCEE – OPM3 – 8/10 – 3D action/strategy
Tense, atmospheric strategy-centred shooter. *Doom* with a brain.

DEMOLITION RACER

Infogrames – OPM54 – 7/10 – Racing game
It's not going to set the world alight, but the gameplay is strong and there's plenty of options.

DESCENT 2

Interplay – OPM21 – 7/10 – 3D blaster
An impressive sequel, but one which suffers in comparison to more contemporary rivals.

DESTRUCTION DERBY

Psygnosis – OPM1 – 7/10 – Racing game
Exhilarating crash-and-smash racer let down by a few key faults.

DESTRUCTION DERBY 2

Psygnosis – OPM13 – 9/10 – Racing game
A total visual and gameplay overhaul of the original title. Brilliant stuff.

DESTRUCTION DERBY RAW

SCEE – OPM60 – 8/10 – Racing game
31 tracks, 24 different cars, upgrades for your existing motor and lethal crash moves. Brilliant.

DEVIL DICE

SCEE – OPM41 – 7/10 – Puzzle game
Off-kilter puzzle game that intrigues and frustrates in equal measure.

DIE HARD TRILOGY

EA – OPM10 – 8/10 – Arcade adventure
Three good games for the price of one. Glitchy in places, but excellent value.

DIE HARD TRILOGY 2

Fox – OPM58 – 6/10 – Arcade adventure
An entertaining blend of game styles.

DINO CRISIS

Virgin – OPM51 – 8/10 – Survival horror
Not quite as atmospheric as its undead counterparts, but just as addictive.

DINO CRISIS 2

Virgin – OPM63 – 8/10 – Survival horror
A brave move into arcade-oriented territory. The gun-based action makes for a fast-paced game.

DISCWORLD 2: MISSING PRESUMED...

Psygnosis – OPM28 – 7/10 – Graphic adventure
If you're a Pratchett fan buy it now. If not, don't.

DISCWORLD NOIR

GTI – OPM54 – 8/10 – Graphic adventure
The upper tier of PlayStation adventuring.

BEAT 'EM UP OF THE MONTH

Name: *Tekken 3*
Publisher: SCEE
Issue: OPM36
Score: 10/10
Game type: Beat 'em up

The best fighting game on PlayStation, by a country mile. Excellent from the moment it starts up, and the more you play it, the better it gets. *Tekken 3* is a fighting game for true fighting connoisseurs. If you don't want to play it to death, that's not because of any fault in its design or execution. It's because you are too scared and too weak. Step aside, and let the true King Of Iron Fist step to the dojo. Oh yes.

DISNEY WORLD MAGICAL RACING TOUR

Eidos – OPM61 – 6/10 – Karting game
Some entertaining tracks, but a few design problems leave long-term value in doubt.

DISRUPTOR

Interplay – OPM13 – 8/10 – 3D shoot 'em up
Stunning scenery and impressive level design. A great alternative to *Doom*.

DOOM

GTI – OPM2 – 9/10 – 3D shoot 'em up
THE classic 3D blaster brought with spooky brilliance to the PlayStation.

DRAGON VALOUR

SCEE – OPM61 – 4/10 – RPG
Lacks both a modern graphics engine and decent gameplay. It's poor.

DRIVER

GTI – OPM44 – 9/10 – Driving game
Gorgeous to look at and satisfying to play, this is nigh on perfect.

DRIVER 2

GTI – OPM44 – 10/10 – Driving game
Great plot, ferocious action, beautifully matched sound and music, eye-rubbing visuals, stupendously entertaining two-player option... Dazzling.

DUKE NUKE'M

GTI – OPM28 – 8/10 – 3D adventure
Super-violent, super-offensive first-person shooter. An essential addition to your collection.

DUKE NUKE'M: A TIME TO KILL

GTI – OPM38 – 9/10 – 3D adventure
Delivers all the classic videogame goodies in one lovely bundle.

**EAGLE ONE HARRIER ATTACK**

Infogrames – OPM56 – 8/10 – Flight sim
A top-notch flight sim with arcade-style sensibilities. Brings all the gameplay thrills of the PC flight sim to the PlayStation.

ECW ANARCHY RULZ

Acclaim – OPM64 – 6/10 – Wrestling sim
A load of brand-new options poohy booted to a terrible old game.

ESPN GREAT OUTDOOR GAMES

Konami – OPM64 – 4/10 – Fishing sim
It's bad, albeit better than other fishing games we could mention.

ETERNAL EYES

Sunsoft – OPM61 – 5/10 – RPG
A predictable and clichéd story line makes this RPG-with-a-hint-of-Pokémon a bit rank.

EURO 2000

EA – OPM59 – 7/10 – Football sim
Another update, another licence frenzy, but it's still fabulous post-pub entertainment.

FLINTSONES BEDROCK BOWLING

Ubi Soft – OPM64 – 7/10 – Bowling sim
Rarely has a game combined gameplay this lifeless with looks that are so offensive.

EUROPEAN PGA GOLF

Infogrames – OPM53 – 7/10 – Golf sim
Lacks the looks and approachability of *Everybody's Golf*, but you can still have a good time.

EVERYBODY'S GOLF

SCEE – OPM34 – 9/10 – Arcade golf game
Cute, well-packaged and highly desirable. A superb little game.

EVERYBODY'S GOLF 2

SCEE – OPM59 – 9/10 – Arcade golf game
A must-have for serious fans of the sport, mini-golfers, leaders of religious cults and footie fans.

EVIL ZONE

Titus – OPM47 – 6/10 – Fighting game
More responsive controls and tactical moves could have made it a winner.

EVO'S SPACE ADVENTURES

Take 2 – OPM63 – 6/10 – 3D platformer
Great idea unfortunately stifled by lack of attention to technical detail.

EXHUMED

BMG – OPM18 – 8/10 – 3D shoot 'em up
Challenging, Egyptian-themed shooter with nice engine and good graphics.

**F1 2000**

EA – OPM58 – 8/10 – Racing sim
The PlayStation's most polished and playable Formula One simulation to date.

F1 CHAMPIONSHIP SEASON 2000

EA – OPM63 – 8/10 – Racing sim
A good F1 game, but there's almost nothing here for those who already have *F1 2000*.

F1 RACING CHAMPIONSHIP

Ubi Soft – OPM59 – 7/10 – Racing sim
A playable game spoilt by sloppy presentation, and a lack of commentary and collision damage.

FAIRY TAIL

Eidos – OPM47 – 7/10 – Football management
It's bad but brilliant at the same time. Basically a game strictly for real football fans.

FA PREMIER LEAGUE FOOTBALL MANAGER 2000

EA – OPM52 – 6/10 – Football management
Looks modern but lacks depth and finesse.

FEAR EFFECT

Eidos – OPM57 – 7/10 – 3D adventure
What should have been an unsung classic is hamstrung by poor game balancing.

FIFA '98: ROAD TO WORLD CUP

EA – OPM28 – 8/10 – Football sim
Better than previous versions. Supreme playability and smart graphics make this a hit.

FIFA '99

EA – OPM40 – 9/10 – Football sim
One of the most instinctive control systems to date.

FIFA 2000

EA – OPM53 – 7/10 – Football sim
It's time. *FIFA* evolved into a more balanced game, with fewer inconsistencies.

FIGHTING FORCE 2

Eidos – OPM54 – 6/10 – Shoot 'em up
A shallow title trying to be something it's not.

FINAL DOOM

GTI – OPM13 – 9/10 – 3D shoot 'em up
30 scary new levels and some visual improvements. As good as *Doom*.

FINAL FANTASY VII

SCEE – OPM26 – 10/10 – RPG
A new standard of excellence for the PlayStation.

FINAL FANTASY VIII

SCEE – OPM52 – 10/10 – RPG
The most impressive and immersive instalment so far.

FLINTSONES BEDROCK BOWLING

Ubi Soft – OPM64 – 7/10 – Bowling sim
Rarely has a game combined gameplay this lifeless with looks that are so offensive.

FISHERMAN'S BAIT 2: BIG OL' BASS

Konami – OPM59 – 7/10 – Fishing sim
With its widely animated 3D fish, it's edge-of-your-folding-canvas stool stuff.

FLUID

SCEE – OPM36 – 7/10 – Music creation
Relaxing, post-pub fare and otherworld experience, offering world peace and harmony.

FOOTBALL MANAGER 2001

EA – OPM63 – 6/10 – Football management
Not the best management sim on PlayStation, but it does hint at the genre's future.

FORMULA 1

Psygnosis – OPM11 – 9/10 – Racing sim
A realistic and immensely playable racer. Essential in its day.

FORMULA 1 '97

Psygnosis – OPM24 – 9/10 – Racing sim
Superior in almost every regard to the 1996 original. A motorsport landmark.

FORMULA 1 '98

Psygnosis – OPM38 – 7/10 – Racing sim
It's definitely no better than *F1 '97*. In fact it's not even any better than the original.

FORMULA KARTS: SPECIAL EDITION

Telstar – OPM27 – 7/10 – 3D racer
Great little racer. Works well as a sim and an arcade two-player experience.

FORMULA ONE 2000

SCEE – OPM64 – 8/10 – Racing sim
Recreates the feel of an F1 race without taking itself too seriously.

FRONT MISSION 3

Square – OPM61 – 8/10 – Mech strategy
One of the more playable strategy games of the year with plenty of pyrotechnics.

FUTURE COP: LAPPD

EA – OPM38 – 8/10 – Shoot 'em up
Surprisingly addictive. Single-player and two-player modes are excellent.

**GALERIANS**

Crave – OPM60 – 7/10 – 3D adventure
A welcome attempt at adding suspense to the survival horror genre, but not great.

GAUNTLET LEGENDS

Midway – OPM58 – 6/10 – Action/Adventure
A potentially inspired update of an arcade classic, that's heavily flawed by a lack of real polish.

GEKIDO: URBAN FIGHTERS

Infogrames – OPM60 – 5/10 – Beat 'em up
A mess of styles that don't make a whole. Too random and crowded to be any good.

GEX 3D: ENTER THE GECKO

BMG – OPM32 – 8/10 – 3D platformer
Polished, handsome and entertaining. Lacking only in innovation.

GHOUL PANIC

SCEE – OPM58 – 6/10 – Light gun game
Although its many levels are testing, the lack of variety is all-too apparent.

G-POLICE

Psygnosis – OPM25 – 9/10 – Flight sim/shooter
Intricate story line and some of the best dogfighting and flying gameplay.

G-POLICE: WEAPONS OF JUSTICE

SCEE – OPM49 – 8/10 – Space flight sim/shooter
Versatile gameplay and stylish presentation make this an excellent sequel to a landmark game.

GRANDIA

Ubi Soft – OPM56 – 8/10 – RPG
Makes up for unspectacular graphics with pure, old-fashioned adventuring.

GRAND THEFT AUTO: LONDON 1969

Take 2 – OPM46 – 7/10 – Criminal sim
Does nothing new and has less content than the original, but most fans of *GTA* will like it.

GRAND THEFT AUTO 2

Rockstar Games – OPM52 – 9/10 – Criminal sim
So good it should be illegal. If you're old enough to buy it, you're old enough to enjoy it. We suggest you do so post haste.

GRANSTREAM SAGA

SCEE – OPM43 – 6/10 – RPG
Intriguing yet often frustrating. Far too much banal dialogue.

DATABASE

GRAN TURISMO

SCEE - OPM32 - 10/10 - Racing sim
Takes every other PlayStation racer and sends them squealing to the pits.

GRAN TURISMO 2

SCEE - OPM55 - 10/10 - Racing sim
The perfect sequel to the perfect game. Staggering stats are backed up by an incredible game.

GRIND SESSION

SCEE - OPM62 - 8/10 - Skateboarding sim
Never in danger of setting the world alight, it runs Tony Hawk's close, but doesn't have the magic.

GRUDGE WARRIORS

Take 2 - OPM58 - 4/10 - Shoot 'em up
There's just not enough here to occupy your time.

GUILTY GEAR

Studio 3 - OPM59 - 4/10 - 2D beat 'em up
An ugly and frustrating fighter - the Chris Eubank of the beat 'em up genre.

H

HARDCORE 4X4

Gremlin - OPM14 - 7/10 - Racing game
An original off-roader which suffers due to its tight, restrictive courses.

HARD EDGE

Sunsoft - OPM46 - 5/10 - 3D arcade/adventure
Has a good idea, then lots of bad ones. A wearying kiddie-graphics Resi evil.

HEART OF DARKNESS

Infogrames - OPM34 - 7/10 - 2D adventure
Beautiful and cinematic, but with flawed gameplay.

HELLNIGHT

Konami - OPM55 - 6/10 - Action/adventure
Occasionally scary, but mostly just messy.

HERC'S ADVENTURES

Virgin - OPM26 - 7/10 - RPG/platform puzzler
Entertaining introduction to the RPG, though essentially a platformer with puzzles.

HOGS OF WAR

Infogrames - OPM60 - 8/10 - Pig 'em up
Basically it's Worms with pigs, but you'll be pushed to find a game that's this much fun.

HYDRO THUNDER

Midway - OPM58 - 7/10 - Racing game
A wonderful conversion of a very enjoyable arcade game, though you'll need to be patient.

I

IMPACT RACING

JVC - OPM9 - 5/10 - Driving/shooting sim
Limited arcade racer which excites initially, but soon becomes tiresome.

IN COLD BLOOD

SCEE - OPM60 - 7/10 - 3D adventure
Good plot, nice ideas, but sadly flawed. It's actually more of a point and click adventure.

INCREDIBLE HULK

Eidos - OPM16 - 4/10 - Action/adventure
Anger-inducing adventure/beat 'em up crossover. Bruce Banner should sue.

INTERNATIONAL TRACK & FIELD

Konami - OPM8 - 8/10 - Sports sim
Aching fingers aside, a bewilderingly addictive multiplayer sport frenzy.

INTERNATIONAL TRACK & FIELD 2

Konami - OPM55 - 7/10 - Sports sim
Only the graphics prove to be any real improvement on the original.

ISS DELUXE

Konami - OPM15 - 8/10 - Football sim
Dated graphics try to ruin a very playable game and thankfully fail.

ISS PRO

Konami - OPM19 - 9/10 - Football sim
Inconsistent yet immensely playable footie title. Still one of the finest available.

ISS PRO '98

Konami - OPM36 - 9/10 - Football sim
Virtually univalued in its field. The best you can buy.

ISS PRO EVOLUTION

Konami - OPM55 - 9/10 - Football sim
Breathtaking in every aspect. Effortlessly recreates the skill and tactical play of football.

SPORTS SIM OF THE MONTH



Name: Tony Hawk's 2
Publisher: Activision
Issue: OPM63
Score: 9/10
Game type: Skateboard sim

The Hawkmeister returns with more tricks, sick parks and challenges. Tony 2 looks even better than its predecessor, eliminating the graphical glitches and fog that slightly tarnished the first outing. Some truly hideous wipeouts increase the cringe/grin factor by an order of magnitude. Boasting more tricks than a magician's convention, Tony 2 will rack up some monstrous scores. The finest extreme sports game out there - bar none.

J

JACKIE CHAN'S STUNTMMASTER

SCEE - OPM59 - 6/10 - Fighting game
Despite mixing fighting with platforming, this is just too repetitive.

JADE COCOON

Crave - OPM53 - 6/10 - RPG
Creaks along at a grandad's pace, but is addictive all the same.

JEREMY MCGRATH SUPERCROSS 2000

Acclaim - OPM64 - 4/10 - Motorbike racing
Looks awful, plays worse. Utterly putdownable.

JET RIDER 2

SCEE - OPM30 - 8/10 - Racing game
Great bikes and physics, lots of imagination, but the course design doesn't match its ambition.

JET RIDER 3

SCEE - OPM56 - 3/10 - Racing game
Fast, frantic and fatally flawed.

JIMMY WHITE'S 2: CUEBALL

Virgin - OPM59 - 5/10 - Snooker sim
Unfortunately, the sport is too slow to be much fun on the PlayStation.

JOJO'S BIZARRE ADVENTURE

Virgin - OPM58 - 6/10 - 2D beat 'em up
For beat 'em up purists and Japanophiles only.

JOHAN LOMU RUGBY

Codemasters - OPM19 - 7/10 - Rugby sim
Not as solid as the man himself, but challenging if you persevere.

JUMPING FLASH

SCEE - OPM1 - 8/10 - Platformer
Original stab at the platform genre which impresses while it lasts.

K

KENSEI: SACRED FIST

Kohami - OPM41 - 9/10 - Beat 'em up
Tekken 3 is safe, but this comes a close second.

KILLER LOOP

Crave - OPM56 - 4/10 - Racing game
Nothing can save this from being, in every department, inferior to Wip3out.

KINGSLEY'S ADVENTURE

SCEE - OPM51 - 6/10 - Platformer
A well-designed and charming adventure, but of limited appeal to hardcore gamers.

KKND: KROSKFIRE

Infogrames - OPM45 - 6/10 - Strategy/war game
A half-hearted strategy game that wanders into radioactive storms and never comes out.

KEY: ★ This indicates a Starplayer game ■ This indicates a Platinum title

KLONOا: DOOR TO PHANTOMILE

SCEE - OPM32 - 7/10 - Platformer
Entertaining story and cutsey cutaways, but old-timers will whiz through it.

KNOCKOUT KINGS '99

EA - OPM41 - 8/10 - Boxing sim
Excellent boxing sim giving you the chance to dance as Ali.

KNOCKOUT KINGS 2000

EA - OPM54 - 7/10 - Boxing sim
The best boxing game around, but given the competition that's not saying much.

KOUDELKA

Infogrames - OPM63 - 5/10 - RPG/adventure
This game's lack of atmosphere and gameplay won't tear you from Vandal Hearts or Resi 3.

KULA WORLD

SCEE - OPM34 - 8/10 - Puzzle game
Excellently crafted and original. Can be frustrating - but then that's the point.

KURUSHI

SCEE - OPM24 - 8/10 - Puzzle game
Enthralling mental workout, let down only by a poor two-player option.

KURUSHI FINAL

SCEE - OPM49 - 9/10 - Puzzle game
If you rate gameplay over aesthetics, this is an essential purchase. There's also a decent Two-Player Mode.

L

LANDMAKER

Eon - OPM60 - 9/10 - Puzzle game
Landmaker is that rare thing, a game that makes you feel you're doing something constructive.

LEGO RACERS

Legu Media - OPM52 - 6/10 - Kart racer
Building the car is as much fun as the racing. Unfortunately, that's not a good thing.

LEGO ROCK RAIDERS

Legu Media - OPM56 - 5/10 - Strategy game
A rag-bag of clever ideas that never really gel. Not enough brain fodder to satisfy hungry little minds.

LE MANS 24 HOURS

Infogrames - OPM4 - 7/10 - Racing sim
One for the discerning racer who cares more for racing than surface sheen and glamour.

LEMMINGS 3D

SCEE - OPM1 - 8/10 - Puzzle game
The classic DMA puzzle game given a 3D facelift for the 32-bit generation.

LEMMINGS COMPILATION

Psychos - OPM39 - 7/10 - Puzzle game
A classic that retains its charm. If you get hooked, you'll just keep playing.

LIBEROGRANDE

SCEE - OPM40 - 7/10 - Football sim
Monotonous gameplay. The choice for the purer of football purists.

LITTLE BIG ADVENTURE

EA - OPM19 - 6/10 - Arcade adventure
Typically-weird Galactic goings-on. Visually charming, but deeply flawed.

LIVE WIRE

GTE - OPM7 - 7/10 - Puzzle game
Too many extra features hamper the gameplay, but fun nonetheless.

LMA MANAGER

Codemasters - OPM51 - 9/10 - Footie management sim
Without doubt, the best football management sim in the park. Nothing else can rival it for atmosphere or attention to detail.

LOADED

Gremlin - OPM2 - 7/10 - Shoot 'em up
Marvellous lighting effects and frantic action, but it soon gets repetitive.

LOST VIKINGS 2

Gremlin - OPM19 - 7/10 - Platformer
Old-fashioned, multi-character puzzler. Still playable after all these years.

M

MACHINE HUNTER

Eidos - OPM22 - 7/10 - Shoot 'em up
Inviting Gauntlet clone which breaks little new ground, but is fun anyway.

MADDEN '97

EA - OPM11 - 8/10 - American football sim
The first title in the PlayStation Madden series and a great sim in its own right.

MADDEN '98

EA - OPM26 - 8/10 - American football sim
At the time, the best American football game you'd find - despite the graphics.

MADDEN NFL '99

EA - OPM38 - 8/10 - American football sim
Update of the only American football game guaranteed to appeal to anyone.

★ MADDEN NFL 2000

EA - OPM38 - 9/10 - American football sim
Excellent update of the excellent Madden series. One of the best sports sim around.

★ MADDEN 2001

EA - OPM46 - 9/10 - American football sim
Expertly mixes arcade action with sim-deep stats and playbooks.

MARTIAN GOTHIC UNIFICATION

Take 2 - OPM24 - 3/10 - Key-hunt shoot 'em up
Tedious derivative mush.

MARVEL SUPER HEROES

Virgin - OPM28 - 8/10 - 2D beat 'em up
2D beat 'em ups live! At last, a decent comic title for the PlayStation.

MARVEL SUPER HEROES VS STREET FIGHTER

Virgin - OPM46 - 5/10 - 2D beat 'em up
Playability, variety and strategy have all been sacrificed on the altar of superhero worship.

MARVEL VS CAPCOM

Virgin - OPM56 - 7/10 - 2D beat 'em up
Veterans will love its depth, but newbies may have trouble persevering beyond the massive explosions.

MARY KING'S RIDING STAR

Midas - OPM55 - 4/10 - Riding sim
An over-sized, over-priced Tamagotchi.

MAX POWER-RACING

Infogrames - OPM42 - 7/10 - Racing game
It feels unfinished and slightly slapdash.

LE MANS 24 HOURS

Infogrames - OPM27 - 8/10 - Third-person blaster
Intelligent and fun blaster, with just the occasional graphical frailty.

MDK

Interplay - OPM27 - 8/10 - Third-person blaster
Intelligent and fun blaster, with just the occasional graphical frailty.

MECHWARRIOR 2

Activision - OPM18 - 9/10 - Mech strategy
Gripping PC conversion which ups the action ante with great effect.

★ MEDAL OF HONOUR

EA - OPM54 - 9/10 - Adventure/shoot 'em up
A historical perspective, objective-based missions and tense, taut action make this essential.

MEDIEVIL

SCEE - OPM38 - 7/10 - 3D adventure
There's an awful lot of imagination in this game, but you'll get frustrated at times.

MEDEVIL 2

SCEE - OPM58 - 8/10 - 3D adventure
A grade A platform adventure, with a sense of fun that's both rare and a pleasure to be part of.

MEGAMAN LEGENDS

Virgin - OPM43 - 7/10 - Action/RPG
Combines 3D action, role-playing and laffs. Will hook those who give its peculiar charms a chance.

MEGAMAN X4

Virgin - OPM43 - 7/10 - 2D shoot 'em up
Likely to provide more challenges than most platform-based shooters.

★ METAL GEAR SOLID SPECIAL MISSIONS

Konami - OPM51 - 8/10 - Sneak 'em up
Unputdownable while it lasts and unforgettable when it's finished. The best game ever made.

METAL GEAR SOLID SPECIAL MISSIONS

Konami - OPM51 - 8/10 - Sneak 'em up
Lacking in originality, but if you're after more stealth you won't be disappointed.

MICHAEL OWEN'S WLS '99

Eidos - OPM41 - 8/10 - Football sim
Intricate controls are marred by complex button combos, but do persevere.

★ MICRO MACHINES V3

Codemasters - OPM18 - 9/10 - Racing game
Cute, addictive diddy racing action with long-lasting appeal.

★ MICRO MANIACS

Codemasters - OPM57 - 9/10 - Kart racer
One of its kind and totally brilliant to boot. This is a minor miracle.

★ MUSIC: MUSIC CREATION FOR THE PLAYSTATION

Codemasters - OPM40 - 9/10 - Music creation
Hundreds of demos to fiddle with. A great game for the bedroom muso.

MTV PURE RIDE

THQ - OPM64 - 4/10 - Snowboarding sim
The energy of the soundtrack is in direct contrast to the laid-back, dull gameplay.

N

N-GEN RACING

Infogrames - OPM59 - 8/10 - Racing game
Requires total concentration and bags of patience. Its speed stops you dwelling on its minor faults.

NAMCO MUSEUM VOLUME 3

SCEE - OPM15 - 6/10 - Retro compilation
Galaxian and *Phozon* stand out in another trawl through coin-op history.

NAMCO MUSEUM VOLUME 5

SCEE - OPM26 - 4/10 - Retro compilation
 Weaker than the previous offerings, but plenty of background detail for obsessives.

NASCAR '99

EA - OPM39 - 5/10 - Racing game
 Tedious course design and just plain dull.

NASCAR 2000

EA - OPM54 - 5/10 - Racing game
 A clever, well-executed sim, but it's still dull.

NBA BASKETBALL 2000

Activision - OPM54 - 6/10 - Basketball sim
 It's easy to score baskets, but just as easy to concede them, making this a game of chance.

NBA: IN THE ZONE 2

Konami - OPM16 - 8/10 - Basketball sim
 A clear improvement over the original in terms of graphics, gameplay and realism.

NBA IN THE ZONE 2000

Konami - OPM58 - 5/10 - Basketball sim
 It's a sad day when a game as gitzzy as basketball gets turned into a game as homely as this.

NBA JAM EXTREME

Acclaim - OPM14 - 7/10 - Basketball sim
 Similar to the *Tournament Edition* in all but the smart new 3D visuals.

NBA JAM TOURNAMENT EDITION

Acclaim - OPM1 - 8/10 - Basketball sim
 This is a dodgy-looking but fast and playable coin-op hooper shooter.

NBA LIVE '97

EA - OPM15 - 7/10 - Basketball sim
 Convincing, but it involves too much management.

NBA LIVE '98

EA - OPM28 - 8/10 - Basketball sim
 Another year, another swanky EA update. Try turning it off - you can't.

NBA LIVE '99

EA - OPM42 - 8/10 - Basketball sim
 The best basketball sim yet.

NBA PRO '98

Konami - OPM31 - 7/10 - Basketball sim
 Finely-balanced sim that'll provide hours of slam-dunking fun.

NBA SHOWTIME

Midway - OPM55 - 7/10 - Basketball sim
 What it lacks in realism and polish, it makes up for in gameplay and isepshe.

NEED FOR SPEED

EA - OPM5 - 8/10 - Racing game
 Rough-around-the-edges racer with an undeniably high fun factor.

NEED FOR SPEED 3: HOT PURSUIT

EA - OPM33 - 7/10 - Racing game
 Great if you love car chases, with the added bonus of an excellent two-player mode.

NEED FOR SPEED PORSCHE CHALLENGE

EA - OPM59 - 8/10 - Racing game
 Inventive use of a lucrative licence, offering loads to tinker with. Good arcade fun.

NEED FOR SPEED ROAD CHALLENGE

EA - OPM46 - 8/10 - Racing game
 Eminently playable, even if it doesn't have the power to compete with *Ridge 4*.

NEWMAN HAAS RACING

Psynopsis - OPM31 - 8/10 - Racing sim
 A brilliant indie car adaptation of Psynopsis' successful F1 engine.

NEXT TETRIS, THE

Hastro - OPM55 - 7/10 - Puzzle game
 Still mind-blowingly addictive, and an undisputed classic, but hardly an original concept.

NFL BLITZ

Gti - OPM40 - 8/10 - American football sim
 One of the most addictive, playable and fun sports games to appear in a long time.

© NFL BLITZ 2000

Midway - OPM54 - 9/10 - American football sim
 The most unputdownable game to hit OPM since Tony Hawk's Skateboarding.

NFL GAMEDAY

SCEE - OPM6 - 7/10 - American football sim
 The first American football game to appear on the PlayStation. Good fun, too.

NFL QUARTERBACK CLUB '97

Acclaim - OPM16 - 8/10 - American football sim
 A smart interpretation of American football that tries nothing new.

NFL XTREME

SCEE - OPM39 - 6/10 - American football sim
 Fun for both single-player and two-players, but not quite extreme enough for our liking.

© NHL '98

EA - OPM26 - 9/10 - Ice hockey sim
 Fantastic graphics, gameplay and sound.

NHL '99

EA - OPM39 - 8/10 - Ice hockey sim
 Strikingly familiar, but still the king of the sticks. More violent and clever than its predecessors.

NHL BLADES OF STEEL 2000

Konami - OPM59 - 6/10 - Ice hockey sim
 Poor player AI and a more stringent approach to skating leave it struggling.

NHL CHAMPIONSHIP 2000

Activation - OPM53 - 8/10 - Ice hockey sim
 The smooth and fast-paced action leaves you feeling battered and bruised, but it's so worthwhile.

NHL FACE OFF '99

SCEE - OPM45 - 8/10 - Ice hockey sim
 Displaying depth and finesse, this is a puck-whacking marvel of a game.

NHL FACE OFF 2000

SCEE - OPM55 - 7/10 - Ice hockey sim
 Top sounds and realistic play, but the graphics could be better. Ace fun, though.

NHL ROCK THE RINK

EA - OPM26 - 6/10 - Ice hockey sim
 The violence is, of course, quite funny, but it's not as good as multiplayer football.

NIGHTMARE CREATURES II

Konami - OPM61 - 7/10 - Horror adventure
 Simple, good-looking, blood-thirsty fun that could have been so much more.

NINJA: SHADOW OF DARKNESS

Eidos - OPM37 - 6/10 - 3D fighting adventure
 Competent but stodgy, and feels rather rushed. Experienced gamers will soon tire of it.

NUCLEAR STRIKE

Virgin - OPM24 - 7/10 - Strategy shooter
 An intriguing and varied copter sim, blemished by a few key faults.

N2O

Gremlin - OPM35 - 7/10 - Shoot 'em up
 Unadventurous, unoriginal, uninspiring, but still oddly entertaining.

NBA SHOWTIME

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The first American football game to appear on the PlayStation. Good fun, too.

OVERBOARD!

Psynopsis - OPM26 - 8/10 - Strategy game
 A duff save system, but this is a prime piece of monkfish nevertheless.

P**PAC-MAN WORLD**

SCEE - OPM53 - 6/10 - Platformer
Pac-Man has been reinterpreted for the millennium and the result is a decent retro platformer.

PANDEMOMIUM

BMG - OPM14 - 9/10 - Platformer
 Gorgeous-looking cuties platform romp. A classic.

PANDEMONIUM 2

BMG - OPM27 - 8/10 - Platformer
 Not quite the beast that its predecessor was, but still one hell of a gas.

PANZER GENERAL

Mindscape - OPM4 - 8/10 - Strategy war game
 The shoddy graphics may put some people off this highly-playable title.

PARAPPA THE RAPPER

SCEE - OPM23 - 8/10 - Music game
 Undoubtedly one of the most original computer games ever.

PARASITE EVE 2

Square - OPM62 - 7/10 - 3D adventure/RPG
 The curious hybrid gameplay makes it interesting but prevents *Eve* from being a total success.

PENNY RACERS

SCEE - OPM14 - 5/10 - Racing game
 Cutesy racer which lacks that elusive driving feel.

PET IN TV

SCEE - OPM38 - 5/10 - Tamagotchi game
 Too tedious for kids, too unrewarding for adults.

PGA TOUR '96

EA - OPM2 - 8/10 - Golf sim
 A well-produced and addictive golfing experience, but not as good as *Everybody's Golf*.

PGA TOUR '97

EA - OPM12 - 7/10 - Golf sim
 Offers more of the same, but is still a top-of-the-range golf game.

PGA TOUR GOLF '98

EA - OPM28 - 7/10 - Golf sim
 Well worth a look if you don't have any of the others in the series - not worth upgrading, though.

PHAT AIR EXTREME SNOWBOARDING

Funsoft - OPM36 - 5/10 - Snowboarding sim
 A jerky and disjointed control system provides little game satisfaction.

PHILOSOMA

SCEE - OPM4 - 5/10 - Shoot 'em up
 A jack of all shoot 'em ups which proves a master of none.

RPG OF THE MONTH

RPG of the Month
 Combines the exhilaration of an arcade jaunt with the realism of a sim.

RPG CHALLENGE

SCEE - OPM19 - 8/10 - Racing game
 While it lacks the immediate fun of *C&C* it will soon lure you in.

POW POW

Konami - OPM31 - 7/10 - Puzzle game
 Solo mode lacks spirit, but play it with friends and it won't disappoint.

POW POW 2

Konami - OPM42 - 7/10 - Puzzle game
 As an update it's disappointing, but still very good multiplayer fun.

PREMIER MANAGER '99

Gremlin - OPM43 - 7/10 - Football management
 Fine for purists, but nothing new to offer above last year's effort.

PREMIER MANAGER 2000

Infogrames - OPM57 - 6/10 - Football management
 Despite its face-lift, it remains old-skool. Not smart enough to tackle *LMA Manager*.

PRO 18 WORLD TOUR GOLF

Psynopsis - OPM46 - 8/10 - Golf sim

If you're looking for a good serious golf sim,

you've found it.

PRO PINBALL: BIG RACE USA

Empire - OPM43 - 3/10 - Pinball sim

Great graphics, but pointless and redundant.

PRO PINBALL: THE WEB

Empire - OPM9 - 7/10 - Pinball sim

Only offers one table, but sure plays a mean pinball (ahem).

PRO PINBALL: TIMESHOCK

Empire - OPM30 - 7/10 - Pinball sim

Best pinball sim to date, if slightly too familiar

and far too expensive.

PROJECT OVERKILL

Konami - OPM12 - 7/10 - Shoot 'em up

Sci-fi blast-em-all-over-the-shop title with guns and gore aplenty.

PITBALL

Time Warner - OPM13 - 7/10 - Sports sim

Difficult to get into at first but becomes fun for those who persevere.

PITFALL 3D: BEYOND THE JUNGLE

Activision - OPM32 - 7/10 - 3D platformer

A good, solid platformer that makes admirable use of the third dimension.

PLAYER MANAGER 2000

3DO - OPM58 - 7/10 - Football management

It may not have *LMA*'s sunny disposition, but it does possess unrivalled depth.

PLAYER MANAGER SEASON 98-99

Infogrames - OPM42 - 8/10 - Football management

Thoroughly enjoyable game that'll please stat fans and George Graham wannabes everywhere.

POCKET FIGHTER

Virgin - OPM38 - 8/10 - 2D beat 'em up

Proof that 2D beat 'em ups are a worthy alternative to polygonal puzzlers.

POINT BLANK

SCEE - OPM50 - 8/10 - Lightgun game

Point Blank remains an entirely unique title and the primary reason to own a lightgun.

POINT BLANK 2

SCEE - OPM32 - 7/10 - Lightgun game

Not as technically impressive as *Time Crisis*, but provides the same compulsive gameplay.

POINT BLANK 3

SCEE - OPM32 - 7/10 - Lightgun game

Another miss opportunity for an old arcade favourite to be updated and improved.

RADIKAL BIKERS

Infogrames - OPM53 - 4/10 - Pizza delivery sim

Another missed opportunity for an old arcade favourite to be updated and improved.

© RAGE RACER

SCEE - OPM21 - 9/10 - Arcade racer

Fabulous arcade racer with perfectly-tuned gameplay and slick visuals.

RAIDEN

Ocean - OPM2 - 7/10 - Shoot 'em up

Seemingly arcade blast brought home with accuracy.

RAINBOW SIX

Red Storm - OPM52 - 5/10 - Action/adventure

Could have been a contender, but it's not. Several key flaws render it overwhelmingly average. A missed opportunity.

RALLY CROSS

SCEE - OPM21 - 7/10 - Racing game

Immensely frustrating at first, but does offer a considerable challenge.

RALLY CROSS 2

SCEE - OPM44 - 6/10 - Racing game

This enthusiastic racing game is essentially driving light and lacking in depth.

RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

EA - OPM56 - 7/10 - Racing game

Essentially this is an arcade racer in a sim's body. A flawed masterpiece.

RALLY MASTERS

Infogrames - OPM59 - 7/10 - Racing game

Looks a bit rubbish, but it's an ideal take on the hyper-realism of *Colin McRae 2.0*.

RAY TRACER

SCEE - OPM21 - 7/10 - Racing game

A good but limited racer which could benefit from a few more tracks and a steeper learning curve.

RAYMAN

Ubisoft - OPM1 - 7/10 - Platformer

Nice to look at and challenging, if a little awkward to play.

RAYMAN 2 THE GREAT ESCAPE

Ubisoft - OPM62 - 8/10 - Platformer

A slick, smart and well thought-out cartoon adventure with plenty of tricks up its sleeve.

RC DE GO

Acclaim - OPM63 - 4/10 - Fun racer

With so many better fun racers about, there's no compelling reason to waste your cash on this.

RC REVENGE

Acclaim - OPM63 - 5/10 - Fun racer

A few single-player thrills, but ultimately let down by a poor Multiplayer Mode.

READY 2 RUMBLE

Midway - OPM54 - 7/10 - Boxing game

A genuinely-funny and extremely-stylish boxing game that's let down by its controls.

REBOOT: COUNTDOWN TO CHAOS

EA - OPM32 - 7/10 - 3D shoot 'em up

DATABASE

KEY: ★ This indicates a Starplayer game ■ This indicates a Platinum title

REEL FISHING

Crave - OPM55 - 6/10 - Fishing sim
The perfect way to get in on the riverside action. Just don't forget to pack a couple of matchsticks.

RESCUE SHOT

SCEE - OPM61 - 5/10 - Lightgun game
A decent introduction to lightgun games for the younger gamer, but not a classic.

RESIDENT EVIL

Virgin - OPM31 - 9/10 - 3D adventure
Chilling, blood-drenched action mixed with fiendish puzzles. A horror legend.

RESIDENT EVIL 2

Virgin - OPM31 - 9/10 - 3D adventure
A classic game that's every bit the equal of its illustrious predecessor. Not long, but great.

RESIDENT EVIL 3: NEMESIS

Eidos - OPM55 - 10/10 - 3D adventure
Quite simply brilliant. A believably environment, a host of evil adversaries and fiendish puzzles.

RESIDENT EVIL: SURVIVOR

Eidos - OPM58 - 8/10 - Shooting game
The inclusion of a Save Game feature would have made it more playable, but it's hugely entertaining.

RE-VOLT

Acclaim - OPM57 - 4/10 - R/C racing game
A disturbingly easy game which betrays definite signs of having been rushed out.

RIDGE RACER

SCEE - OPM1 - 9/10 - Racing game
It was the quintessential PlayStation racer in its day. Still not bad for £20.

RIDGE RACER REVOLUTION

SCEE - OPM6 - 8/10 - Racing game
Improves the visuals a little, adds a couple of new features, and that's about it.

RIDGE RACER TYPE 4

SCEE - OPM45 - 9/10 - Racing game
If you're turned off by engines you'll find your need for speed rated here.

RISING ZAN: THE SAMURAI GUNMAN

Agetec - OPM55 - 5/10 - 3D adventure
Highly-flawed attempt at a fresh crossover.

RIVAL SCHOOLS

Virgin - OPM40 - 8/10 - Beat 'em up
Perfectly-balanced gameplay with an excellent two-player mode.

ROAD RASH 3D

EA - OPM34 - 7/10 - Motorbiking game
Above-average arcade racer. A matter of taste.

ROADRASH: JAILBREAK

EA - OPM59 - 4/10 - Motorbiking game
Well past its sell-by date, lacking even the rudiments of a half-decent modern racer.

ROADSTERS

Titus - OPM53 - 5/10 - Racing game
Some entertainment to be had, but a thoroughly average game.

ROLLAGE

Psynopsis - OPM34 - 9/10 - Future racing game
Erratic handling may alienate racing purists, but play it on two-player and you'll soon get hooked.

ROLLAGE STAGE II

SCEE - OPM57 - 9/10 - Future racing game
Racers don't get much more exciting than this. With improved graphics and expanded gameplay.

RONALDO V-FOOTBALL

Infogrames - OPM60 - 7/10 - Football sim
Like Ronaldo himself, it never really lives up to its early promise, yet is still strangely compelling.

RONIN BLADE

Konami - OPM54 - 6/10 - 3D adventure
A very good idea, but the execution could have been so much better.

ROSCO MCQUEEN

SCEE - OPM27 - 7/10 - Platformer
Won't make your jaw drop, but it oozes playability.

R-TYPE DELTA

SCEE - OPM45 - 8/10 - Shoot 'em up
An updated, uprated 2D shooter which doesn't do a lot that previous versions haven't. But it's fun.

R-TYPES

Virgin - OPM37 - 8/10 - Shoot 'em up
Flaming great. If you know who Jason King is you'll think this is fab.

RUGRATS

THQ - OPM44 - 4/10 - Platformer/adventure
A disappointing re-working of occasionally effective TV. Only for those of a single-figure age.

RUGRATS: STUDIO TOUR

THQ - OPM60 - 6/10 - Platformer/adventure
Not bad. But neither is it brilliant. Definitely an improvement on the last release.



SAGA FRONTIER 2

Square - OPM58 - 8/10 - RPG
Atones for its lightweight story by feeding you chocolate-coated strategy with a hardcore centre.

SAMPRAS EXTREME TENNIS

Codemasters - OPM9 - 7/10 - Tennis sim
A good-but-not-brilliant tennis sim which lacks the oomph of a true classic.

S.C.A.R.S.

Ubisoft - OPM36 - 8/10 - Racing game
A great racing game that will give *Circuit Breakers* a run for its money.

SENTIENT

Psynopsis - OPM18 - 7/10 - 3D adventure
A fascinating, in-depth experience marred only by the frustrating control system.

SHADOW GUNNER

Ubisoft - OPM41 - 6/10 - Mech shoot 'em up
Not quite as good as *MechWarrior 2* - competent, but uninspired.

SHADOW MADNESS

SCEE - OPM55 - 6/10 - RPG
Basic stop-gap for the more dedicated RPG fan.

SHADOWMAN

Acclaim - OPM51 - 8/10 - 3D adventure
Rises above the typical 3D adventure basics and boasts a challenging psycho-quest.

SHANGHAI TRUE VALOR

Sunssoft - OPM42 - 6/10 - Oriental puzzle
Solid, nicely varied version of a classic game.

SHAOLIN

THQ - OPM56 - 5/10 - Beat 'em up
Badly let down by its controls and poor presentation. Nice idea, shame about the execution.

SILENT BOMBER

Studio 3 - OPM62 - 7/10 - Shoot 'em up
Well presented and enjoyable; there's plenty of fun to be had here, but it can be very frustrating.

SILENT HILL

Konami - OPM48 - 10/10 - Survival horror
A stunning, genre-defining adventure.

SIM CITY 2000

Maxis - OPM11 - 7/10 - Strategy game
Poor looks and addictive gameplay clash in this build-a-town classic.

SKULL MONKEYS

EA - OPM30 - 7/10 - 2D platformer
Polished and playable, but ultimately repetitive.

SLAM 'N JAM '96

BMG - OPM9 - 5/10 - Basketball sim
Offers an alright-ish one-player mode, but is overshadowed by fine titles.

SLAMSCAPE

MTV - OPM18 - 6/10 - Shoot 'em up
Flat, barren, uninspiring blaster which thinks it's original. But it isn't.

SLED STORM

EA - OPM51 - 8/10 - Snowmobile game
A cheeky cocktail of jumps, short-cuts and tricks with ice. Unpretentious and highly playable.

SMASH COURT TENNIS

SCEE - OPM14 - 6/10 - Tennis sim
Colourful and quaint, but too slow and fiddly for the next-gen gamer.

SNO CROSS CHAMPIONSHIP RACING

Crave - OPM62 - 8/10 - Winter sports sim
A slick, fast and well presented racer that knocks along at a fair old pace. Well worth a look.

SNOW RACER

Ocean - OPM32 - 8/10 - Winter sports sim
Combines the merits of skiing and snowboarding to great effect.

SOCER '97

Eidos - OPM20 - 6/10 - Football sim
Rolling end-to-end action slightly compromised by poor visuals.

SOUL BLADE

SCEE - OPM19 - 8/10 - 3D beat 'em up
Great weapon-based fighter which slaps the ruddy face of Toshinden.

SOUL REAVER: LEGACY OF KAIN

Eidos - OPM43 - 9/10 - 3D action/adventure
New gameplay tricks and an amazing structure make it a close second to *Tomb Raider*.

SOUTH PARK

Acclaim - OPM54 - 3/10 - First-person shooter
Fun for a while, then you realise the unspeakably repetitive gameplay is never going to change.

SOUTH PARK: CHEF'S LUV SHACK

Acclaim - OPM54 - 3/10 - Quiz game
You can have more fun with a pub quiz machine than with Isaac Hayes being a bit racist.

SOUTH PARK RALLY

Acclaim - OPM56 - 5/10 - Kart racer
Plenty of sub-games and hidden secrets, but there are better karting games out there.

SOVIET STRIKE

EA - OPM13 - 7/10 - Combat flight sim
It's short and unoriginal but offers an addictive blast while it lasts.

SPACE DEBRIS

SCEE - OPM55 - 6/10 - Space shoot 'em up
A solid and extremely-challenging shoot 'em up, but the whole concept is a touch dated.

SPACE INVADERS

Activation - OPM55 - 5/10 - Arcade shoot 'em up
This game will leave a permanent stain on the rose-tinted glasses of even the most dedicated fan.

SPEC OPS: STEALTH PATROL

Take 2 - OPM57 - 4/10 - Stealth 'em up
Lots of good ideas, but seemingly put together with minimal thought.

SPEDBALL 2100

Empire - OPM64 - 7/10 - Futuristic sport
Good gameplay without longevity. A missed opportunity to bring a classic into the next century.

SPEED FREAKS

SCEE - OPM49 - 9/10 - Kart racer
The concentration on gameplay is refreshing – offers all you could want from a cutesy racer.

SPIDER-MAN

Activation - OPM62 - 9/10 - Adventure
Addictive adventure that grips you to the end, *Spider-Man* is a joy to play, and it looks great.

SPIN JAM

Empire - OPM61 - 6/10 - Puzzle game
A fairly decent puzzle game, but you'd be better off with one of the original *Bust-A-Moves*.

SPYRO THE DRAGON

SCEE - OPM39 - 8/10 - Platformer
Charming and superbly polished but spoiled by a lack of challenge early on.

SPYRO 2: GATEWAY TO GLIMMER

SCEE - OPM52 - 10/10 - Platformer
As brilliantly balanced as it is sweetly pretty and as close as you're going to get to perfect.

STAR IXION

SCEE - OPM57 - 7/10 - Space shoot 'em up
Namco add to a simple fly-and-shoot formula by throwing everything it can at you.

STAR OCEAN: THE SECOND STORY

SCEE - OPM57 - 7/10 - RPG
An enjoyable RPG that's hampered by its scripting.

STAR TREK: INVASION

Activation - OPM62 - 9/10 - 3D space shooter
Star Trek games shouldn't be this much fun, *Invasion* is the definitive 3D space shooter.

STAR WARS EPISODE I: THE PHANTOM MENACE

Activation - OPM46 - 9/10 - Action/adventure
The Force is strong in this one. A highly successful crossroad of genres.

STAR WARS EPISODE I: JEDI POWER BATTLES

Activation - OPM58 - 7/10 - Action/adventure
Slick, entertaining and eminently playable.

STAR WARS: MASTERS OF TERAS KÄSI

Virgin - OPM32 - 6/10 - Beat 'em up
A beat 'em up steep in *Star Wars* clothing. Enjoyable but not perfect.

STREAK

GTEI - OPM40 - 6/10 - Future sports
Splotted by a twitchy and awkward control system and a lack of finish.

STREAKS

GTEI - OPM40 - 7/10 - Future sports

Splotted by a twitchy and awkward control system and a lack of finish.

RACER OF THE MONTH

THRASHER SKATE & DESTROY

Take 2 - OPM54 - 8/10 - Skateboarding sim
An excellent game, but not quite up to the standard of Tony Hawk's Skateboarding.

THREE LIONS

BMG - OPM33 - 8/10 - Football sim
Purist's football game, written by fans for fans.

TIGER WOODS 2000

EA - OPM56 - 5/10 - Golf sim
Ignore the licence and slick graphics and buy Everybody's Golf instead.

TIME CRISIS

SCEE - OPM27 - 8/10 - Lightgun game
The grooviest, bloodiest lightgun shoot 'em up.

TINY TANK

SCEE - OPM56 - 6/10 - Shoot 'em up/platformer
Pleasurable, but never threatens to demand more than an evening or two of your time.

TOTAL NO.1

SCEE - OPM26 - 8/10 - 3D beat 'em up
Boasts a fluid frame-rate and sound grasp of 3D, but lacks authority.

TOCA TOURING CAR CHAMPIONSHIP

Codemasters - OPM27 - 8/10 - Racing sim
Realistic and fun with great graphics and sound.

TOCA 2: TOURING CARS

Codemasters - OPM40 - 9/10 - Racing sim
An improvement on the original. One of the best racing games out there and lots of fun.

TOCA WORLD TOURING CARS

Codemasters - OPM62 - 10/10 - Racing sim
Remember how much fun TOCA 2 was? Double it and add four. WTC is non-stop racing excitement.

TOKYO HIGHWAY BATTLE

THQ - OPM19 - 7/10 - Racing game
Passable urban racer with the added twist that you have to drive through traffic.

TOMB RAIDER

Eidos - OPM13 - 10/10 - 3D adventure
The perfect balance of action and exploration. Popular heroine, too.

TOMB RAIDER 2

Eidos - OPM26 - 10/10 - 3D adventure
Who'd have thought it could get better? Lara's looking as lovely as ever, too.

TOMB RAIDER 3

Eidos - OPM40 - 10/10 - 3D adventure
Incredible. Stunning. Massive. It'll keep you playing for months.

TOMB RAIDER: THE LAST REVELATION

Eidos - OPM52 - 10/10 - 3D adventure
Undoubtedly our favourite in the series.

TOMBI

SCEE - OPM36 - 8/10 - Platformer
Puzzles and bizarre logic make this extremely appealing. A welcome surprise.

TOMBI 2

SCEE - OPM59 - 6/10 - Platformer
These days we demand more from our platformers than simple pig-beating.

TOMORROW NEVER DIES

EA - OPM54 - 5/10 - Adventure/shoot 'em up
A classic example of a wasted opportunity.

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 2

Activision - OPM63 - 9/10 - Skateboarding sim
Not so much a game as a way of losing entire weekends trying to master the trickster's art.

TONY HAWK'S SKATEBOARDING

Activision - OPM50 - 9/10 - Skateboarding sim
If you're a skater this is exactly what you've been waiting for. A hugely-entertaining game.

TOSHINDEN 4

Studio 3 - OPM60 - 3/10 - Beat 'em up
The presentation and multiple game modes provide no cover for a lacklustre fighting game.

TOTAL DRIVIN'

Ocean - OPM25 - 8/10 - Racing game
A huge variety of tracks and cars, but it doesn't quite work as a single game.

TOTAL NBA '96

SCEE - OPM3 - 9/10 - Basketball sim
The perfect combination of accuracy and playability. Sweet hoop dreams.

TOTAL NBA '97

SCEE - OPM29 - 9/10 - Basketball sim
Better motion capture and a few graphical tweaks keep Total on top.

TOTAL NBA '98

SCEE - OPM34 - 8/10 - Basketball sim
Realism wins over ease of play, but it's still up there with the best.

TOY STORY 2

Activision - OPM54 - 8/10 - 3D platformer
Graphically strong, packed with great characters and mild enough for all the family.

TRANSPORT TYCOON

Ocean - OPM20 - 6/10 - Strategy game
Set up and run a transport network. Marginally more fun than it sounds.

TRAP RUNNER

Konami - OPM47 - 6/10 - Strategy game
If you're after that unadulterated retro feel and you're not short of a bob or two...

TRICK'N SNOWBOARDER

Virgin - OPM55 - 7/10 - Snowboarding sim
Better than MTV Snowboarding, but lacks the racing thrills of Cool Boarders 3.

TRIPLE PLAY 2000

EA - OPM47 - 7/10 - Baseball sim
Its appeal remains sadly/inevitably limited.

TRUE PINBALL

Ocean - OPM4 - 7/10 - Pinball sim
A comprehensive simulation of the pinball experience with many modes.

TUNNEL B1

Ocean - OPM10 - 8/10 - Shoot 'em up
Visually accomplished blaster which frustrates as much as it engrosses.

TWISTED METAL

SCEE - OPM62 - 7/10 - Driving game
A crash-and-smash treat for two players, but rather dull for one.

TWISTED METAL 2

SCEE - OPM17 - 9/10 - Driving game
Stuffed with detail and thrilling, addictive action.

**UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE**

Eidos - OPM45 - 9/10 - Football sim
Marries the instant appeal of FIFA with the number of moves in ISS Pro. Plays like a dream.

UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE: SEASON 99/00

Eidos - OPM57 - 9/10 - Football sim
Fluid, entertaining and challenging.

UEFA STRIKER

Infogrames - OPM52 - 8/10 - Football sim
Enjoyable enough, but a few too many flaws to make it a serious contender.

UM JAMMER LAMMY

SCEE - OPM50 - 8/10 - Music game
A seriously-entertaining spectacle. Where else are you going to get a lamb playing a chainsaw?

VICTORY BOXING

JVC - OPM38 - 8/10 - Boxing sim
One of the best in this admittedly limited genre. Fight fans will love it.

VICTORY BOXING CHALLENGER

JVC - OPM34 - 6/10 - Boxing sim
Not exactly out for the count, but there's not enough improvement to warrant this comeback.

VICTILANTE 8

Activation - OPM34 - 7/10 - Driving game
Enjoyable in two-player bursts, and sharp-looking. Twisted Metal 2's better, though.

VIGILANTE 8: 2ND OFFENCE

Activation - OPM55 - 6/10 - Driving game
Offers very little that's new or exclusive. You're better off with Crash Team Racing.

VIRTUAL POOL

Interplay - OPM16 - 8/10 - Pool sim
Superbly-presented and robustly-playable, but lacking beer-stained baize.

VIVA FOOTBALL

Virgin - OPM42 - 7/10 - Football sim
Bags of history, buckets of nostalgia but still only an average kick-about.

V-RALLY

Ocean - OPM21 - 9/10 - Rally racing game
Fine visuals and a plethora of tracks and cars combined to near-perfection. It's quite tricky to master, though.

V-RALLY 2

Infogrames - OPM47 - 10/10 - Rally racing game
Four-player Mode, a great Track Editor, a genuine sense of speed... Like rallying? You'll love this.

VR BASEBALL

Interplay - OPM21 - 5/10 - Baseball sim
An unexciting and unemotional sim, which is more Isehable than real.

VS

THQ - OPM34 - 7/10 - Beat 'em up
Not the best, but sufficiently different to be worth the asking price.

V2000

Grolar - OPM38 - 7/10 - Strategic shoot 'em up
Not recommended for the inexperienced or casual gamer. Otherwise it's not bad.

WACKY RACES

Infogrames - OPM64 - 4/10 - Cartoon racer
Sub-standard racer that'll have you frothing and twitching in frustration.

**URBAN CHAOS**

Eidos - OPM57 - 8/10 - 3D adventure
A compulsively-playable adventure game.

**WARCRAFT 2**

EA - OPM22 - 9/10 - Combat strategy
More depth and detail than C&C, but perhaps not quite as addictive.

WARGAMES: DEFCON 1

EA - OPM35 - 8/10 - Shoot 'em up
Unchallenging, but there's plenty of missions and dual scenarios.

WARHAMMER

EA - OPM12 - 8/10 - War game
A tough, challenging combination of a war sim and a God game.

WARHAMMER: DARK OMEN

EA - OPM32 - 8/10 - Strategy game
Excellent fantasy strategy game with improved graphics and tweaked gameplay

WARHAWK

SCEE - OPM2 - 8/10 - Combat shoot 'em up
Addictive and varied sim, providing a difficult but rewarding experience.

WAR OF THE WORLDS, THE

GTI - OPM52 - 8/10 - Action/adventure
Some great tunes and ideas are marred by shoddy construction and technical problems.

WARPATH: JURASSIC PARK

EA - OPM55 - 4/10 - Beat 'em up
A piteously forgettable dino fighter that's not worth your time or money.

WARZONE 2100

Eidos - OPM45 - 9/10 - Real-time strategy
Without a doubt, the best real-time strategy game available for the PlayStation.

WCW MAYHEM

EA - OPM53 - 7/10 - Wrestling sim
No classic, but if you enjoy the razzle and OTT dramatics of the real thing, this one's for you.

WHO WANTS TO BE A MILLIONAIRE?

Eidos Interactive - OPM64 - 5/10 - Quiz game
Too slow and picky for post-pub laughs; too repetitive for a single-player test.

WILD ARMS

SCEE - OPM37 - 9/10 - RPG
Slick, polished and fun. Granted, it's no Final Fantasy but remains a must for any RPG fan.

WILD 9

Interplay - OPM37 - 7/10 - Platform
Despite the hype from Shiny, this is outdated and not as good as other platforms.

WILD RAPIDS

Eon - OPM63 - 3/10 - Canoe racer
A case of sink, rather than swim. It's clunky, uncontrollable, inflexible and dull.

WILLIAMS ARCADE'S GREATEST HITS

GTI - OPM7 - 7/10 - Retro compilation
Age shall not weary them. Well, not much anyway. Defender is still the biz.

WING COMMANDER IV

EA - OPM21 - 8/10 - Space shoot 'em up
A huge improvement on the previous title. Plenty of scope and depth.

WIPEOUT

Psygnosis - OPM1 - 8/10 - Racing game
Dizzying pyrotechnic racer set in the near-future. Marvellous soundtrack.

WIPEOUT 2097

Psygnosis - OPM12 - 9/10 - Racing game
Improved gameplay and brilliant link-up option keeps this ahead of rivals.

WIPEOUT 3000

SCEE - OPM50 - 9/10 - Racing game
The definitive futuristic racing game. The three year wait has been more than worth it.

WIPEOUT 3: SPECIAL EDITION

SCEE - OPM61 - 9/10 - Racing game
A true collector's item and a little piece of PlayStation history.

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP SNOOKER

Codemasters - OPM88 - 8/10 - Snooker sim
Enjoy gloriously long hours dropping balls into pockets versus the best players in the world.

WORLD CUP '98

EA - OPM34 - 9/10 - Football sim
It took a while to arrive, but this was the ultimate footie sim back in '98.

WORLD LEAGUE SOCCER

Eidos - OPM33 - 7/10 - Football sim
A tireless worker that's challenging throughout. No flash, no licence, just the business.

Z

SCEE - OPM29 - 7/10 - Strategy game
Inevitably has its moments. Not generally recommended, though.

ZERO DIVIDE 2

SCEE - OPM59 - 5/10 - 3D platformer
Average, underwhelming fighting game. With Tekken 3 on Platinum, you know what to do.

40 WINKS

GTI - OPM52 - 7/10 - 3D platformer
A real Jo Guest of a game - vacuous, pretty and you wouldn't say no to a quick grapple with it.

WORMS

Ocean - OPM7 - 7/10 - Puzzle game
Much-admired for its originality, though it lacks visual style or lasting appeal.

WORMS ARMAGEDDON

Hasbro - OPM53 - 8/10 - Puzzle game
The worm hasn't just turned - it has been turned into a much more sophisticated game.

WORMS PINBALL

Infogrames - OPM55 - 6/10 - Pinball sim
Feature-packed, but there's a limit to how much pinball even the biggest fan can take.

WRECKIN CREW

Telstar - OPM34 - 7/10 - Racing game
While not exactly taxing, this is a defiantly fast and frantic racer.

WU-TANG: TASTE THE PAIN

Activision - OPM53 - 8/10 - Beat 'em up
A sword-swingin', ass-whuppin', offal-hurlin' slice of Shaolin madness.

WWF ATTITUDE

Acclaim - OPM49 - 8/10 - Wrestling sim
Even if you're not a wrestling fan, this remains a looker.

WWF SMACK DOWN

THQ - OPM57 - 8/10 - Wrestling sim
Other games may have more gore and flash, but this is a solid, no-nonsense slab and grapple.

WWF WAR ZONE

Acclaim - OPM37 - 7/10 - Wrestling sim
A good-looking, gripping title let down by its sub-standard gameplay.

X-FILES, THE

SCEE - OPM50 - 3/10 - Adventure
Reminds us that the concept of interactive movies was discarded long ago.

X GAMES PRO BOARDERS

SCEE - OPM43 - 7/10 - Snowboarding sim
Puts across the sport's cool image, but repetitive with superficial gameplay.

X-COM: TERROR FROM THE DEEP

Microprose - OPM14 - 8/10 - Strategy game
Very similar to the previous title, but equally as spooky and compelling.

X-MEN: CHILDREN OF THE ATOM

Acclaim - OPM31 - 7/10 - Beat 'em up
Proficient conversion of a playable arcade game that's showing its age.

X-MEN: MUTANT ACADEMY

Activation - OPM63 - 5/10 - Beat 'em up
The looks say Bloody Roar, the gameplay says 'bloody naif'.

X-MEN VS STREET FIGHTER EX

Virgin - OPM37 - 6/10 - Beat 'em up
Why settle for stylised comic-book action when you can have smooth and fluid action in Tekken 3.

YEH YEH TENNIS

Sunsoft - OPM60 - 6/10 - Tennis sim
A reasonably entertaining arcade tennis game. Not nearly as good as Anna Kournikova's though.

YO-YO'S PUZZLE PARK

JVC - OPM46 - 7/10 - Puzzle game
It won't keep you up 'til four in the morning, Bust-A-Move-style, but it's good, clean fun.

Z

SCEE - OPM29 - 7/10 - Strategy game
Inevitably has its moments. Not generally recommended, though.

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COMPETITION

WIN A TV, VIDEO & MIDI SYSTEM WORTH £1,000

THROW OUT YOUR DINOSAUR OF A TV AND REPLACE IT WITH ONE OF THESE HOME ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEMS

As the blood-spurting, leg-chewing, bone-crusher of a game that is *Dino Crisis 2* storms into a games shop near you, those ever-generous people at Virgin have got together with OPM and Aiwa and are giving you the opportunity to move your living room out of the Jurassic and into the future. We're giving away three complete home entertainment systems, worth £1,000 each.

Each system contains all the essential items to move you into the 21st century and consists of a sleek silver 21-inch television that has Nicam Hi-Fi Stereo sound, fastext, Q-surround, two front speakers and numerous other features; a three-CD mini system with built-in Dolby Pro Logic surround, twin-cassette deck, full remote control, two-way bass reflex speakers and a surround sound speaker package; and a VCR with VideoPlus+ PDC and Nicam/Hi-Fi Stereo. Ten runners-up will get special Virgin goody bags with loads of games and other cool stuff.

To be one of our three lucky winners, complete the following well-known saying and call **09013 882251** between 1/11/00 and 28/11/00 with the correct number.

Dinosaurs are as dead as...?

1. pigeons 2. sparrows 3. dodos

>>Calls cost 25p (less than the price of a stamp). Check with the bill-payer before you call<<

The Rules

No purchase necessary. No postal entries. No correspondence will be entered into. No employees of Future Publishing, Virgin, Aiwa or affiliated companies may enter. There is no cash alternative to the prize. Cheating will lead to disqualification. All calls for this competition must be made between 1/11/2000 and 28/11/2000. The editor's decision is final. Do not argue with him, he's a scary man.



Techno heaven. All this lovely stuff could be yours if you strike it lucky. And call. You have to call



Dino Crisis 2: the perfect game to play on this monster of a TV (below)

THE HURRICANE

We've got five copies of *The Hurricane*, the Oscar-nominated boxing biopic from Warner Home Video to give away. As if that wasn't enough, you can get a DVD to play it on. To get your hands on this superb prize, simply answer this question and call 09013 882252 between 1/11/00 and 28/11/00 with the correct number.



Q: What kind of wind is Jimmy White?

1. Breeze 2. Gust 3. Whirl

>>Calls cost 25p (less than a stamp). Check with the bill-payer before you call. See Competition Rules. Entrants must be over 15 to receive *The Hurricane*.

FIGHTING TALK

Grapple fans listen up: we've managed to get our hands on a whole heap of WWF wrestling goodies. Ten lucky winners will receive one of these WWF Tuff Talking figures and a Nitro Wrestling arena. So if you think you know your WCW from your ECW, simply answer the following question and call 09013 882254 between 1/11/00 and 28/11/00.



Q: Which wrestler shares his name with one of the three following professions?

1. The Butcher 2. The Baker 3. The Undertaker

>>Available from all main toy shops priced from £19.99. Calls cost 25p (less than a stamp). Check with the bill-payer before you call. See Competition Rules.

OFFICIAL UK PlayStation Magazine CROSSWORD

CLUES ACROSS

- Mr Hoffman of *Pro BMX* acclaim (3)
- Cross, Square RPG sequel (6)
- Spy _, PS2-bound arcade classic (6)
- Brave _, Japanese adventure (4)
- Cartoon family who'll be wrestling on the PlayStation (8)
- _, 2, one taking big steps towards a sword-slashing follow-up (7)
- 2D fighter that's a 'bizarre adventure' (5)
- Swift speedboat racer (5)
- SCEE's answer to *Pokémon* (7)
- Tanner can get out if it in *Driver 2!* (3)
- Exodus, the second Oddworld platformer (4)
- F1 World Grand_* 2000, forthcoming addition to the Formula 1 market (4)
- The _ Of Darkness, protector of a horrifyingly poor action adventure (8)
- ATV Quad _, Racing, ropy quadbiking release (5)

CLUES DOWN

- Company of *Metal Gear Solid* fame (6)
- Big beast from the *Muppet Adventure* platformer? (7)
- Park World, PlayStation fun park manager (5)
- Capcom's action-packed *Dino* sequel (6)
- GAZING _, at the centre of an absorbing strategy (5)
- How many discs does *Gran Turismo 2* come on? (3)
- Cross Championship Racing, Sled Storm-Zone (3)
- Scheming genre like the *Command & Conquer* series (8)
- Strawberry-flavoured spin puzzler? (3)
- Vib _, musical PS1 title (6)
- Maze-based coin-op classic converted by Namco to the PlayStation (3-3)
- The Road To El _, PSX tie-in to Spielberg's new animated movie (6)
- Konami's Evolution-ary soccer sim (3,3)
- Breath _, IV, a blazing RPG (2,4)

After completing the crossword rearrange the letters from the seven shaded squares to spell out the prize word. Clue: A bandicoot by any other name

TRAVEL BY DRAGONFLY

Take to the skies with one of these fantastic Dragonfly remote-controlled X-Wings. Thanks to Vivid Imaginations we're giving away six of them – and they're not even available in the shops yet. To be in with a chance of winning, simply answer the following question and call 09013 882253 between 1/11/00 and 28/11/00 with the correct number.



Q: Which dragon is featured on this month's demo disc?

1. Spyro 2. Pete's 3. Puff

>>Dragonfly will be in the shops this Christmas for £69.99. Calls cost 25p (less than a stamp). Check with the bill-payer before you call. See Competition Rules.

A FANTASY COME TRUE

These fantastic *Final Fantasy VIII* figures could be yours. We've got 12 of these exclusive collectors' sets and we can't wait to make a dozen RPG fans as happy as Larry. To be a winner, simply answer the following question and call 09013 882255 between 1/11/00 and 28/11/00 with the correct number.



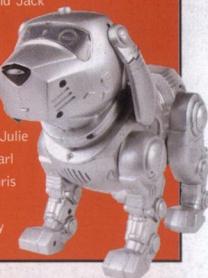
Q: How many *Final Fantasy* videogames have there been in the series so far?

- 1.7 2.8 3.9

>>Figures available in all main toy shops. Calls cost 25p (less than a stamp). Check with the bill-payer before you call. See Compo Rules.

COMPO WINNERS

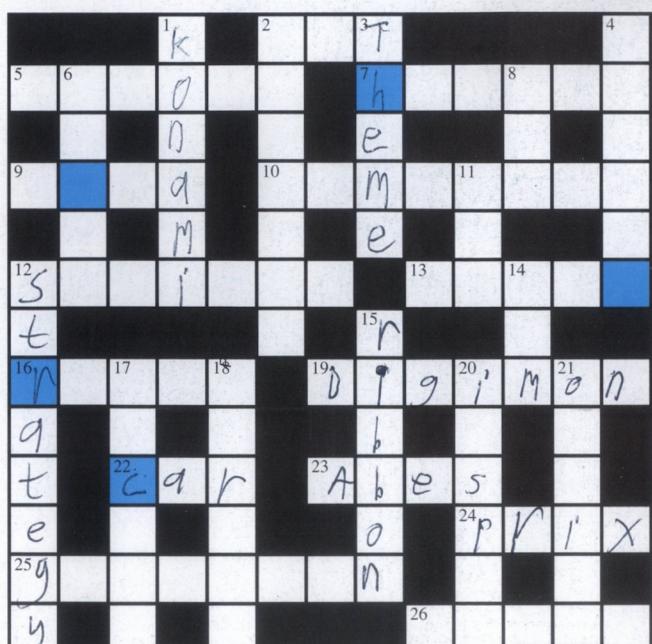
Nearly 5,000 of you entered our Win A Bike compo. Here are the winners and runners-up: Malcolm Harbin, Tim Cronin, James Hasslegrave, Robert Simms, Robert Green, James Mason, Peter McKee, Michael Netley, Sean Boswell, Steven Linley, Matthew Taylor, John Willis, David Cleece, Sam Cook, Adam Cooper, Matthew Weeks, James Craddock, Lewis Marsland, Sean Ankempen and Jack Barker. Winners of a Tekstar pup (right) included Kevin Joyce, Julie Nicholson, Carl Langston, Chris Dukes and Mark Murray.



COMPETITION ENQUIRIES:
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Finally, your chance to use that PlayStation brain knowledge and win £200 worth of goodies from the lovely Infogrames, send your answer to 'OPM Crossword 65' at the usual address. First correct answer wins!



BY ALERIC LINDEN

COMPILED FOR OFFICIAL UK

ENDGAME...

Final Reality

What happens when gaming fantasy meets harsh reality? Part One of a 3,798-part practical guide

EVERY MONTH WE ASK MUMFORD, OUR HAPLESS WORK EXPERIENCE KID, TO APPLY HIS VIDEOGAME SKILLS TO REAL-LIFE SITUATIONS...

Words: Lee Hall
Illustration: Anne Cakebread



EXPERIMENT ONE: ON THE PULL AS DUKE NUDEM

FIG. 1 Get in character

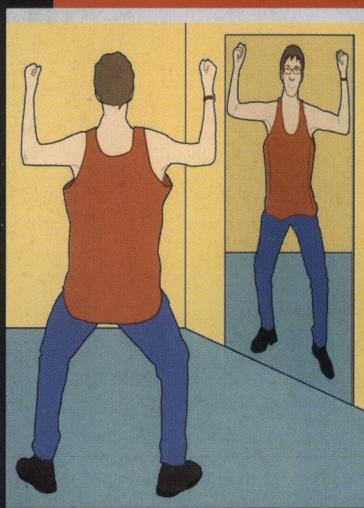


FIG. 2 Try out your best Duke line

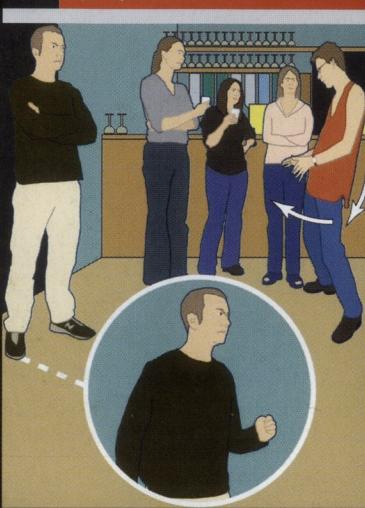
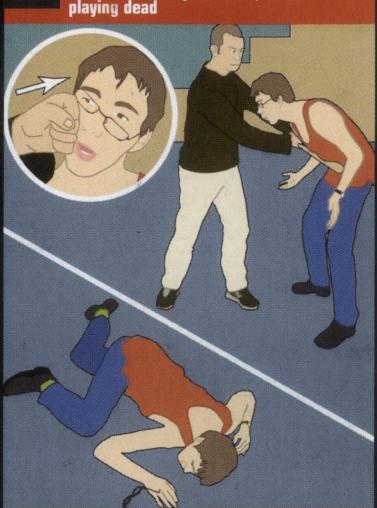


FIG. 3 Never lose your cool



FIG. 4 Never swallow your teeth, unless playing dead



Mumford: "Tonight I'm gonna do as the Duke does and score myself some honeys. Those stacked chunks of meat down at The Three Nags are gonna love this get-up!"

Mumford: "Can I buy you babes a drink? Let's rock!"
Boyfriend: "Is there a problem here?"
Ladies: "This man thinks he's Will Smith or something. Sort him out."

Mumford: "You can't do this to the Duke. I'll kick your sorry butt!"

Boyfriend: "Take that, you little bugger!"
Mumford: "OOF! URGH! (Etc)"

Success Rating

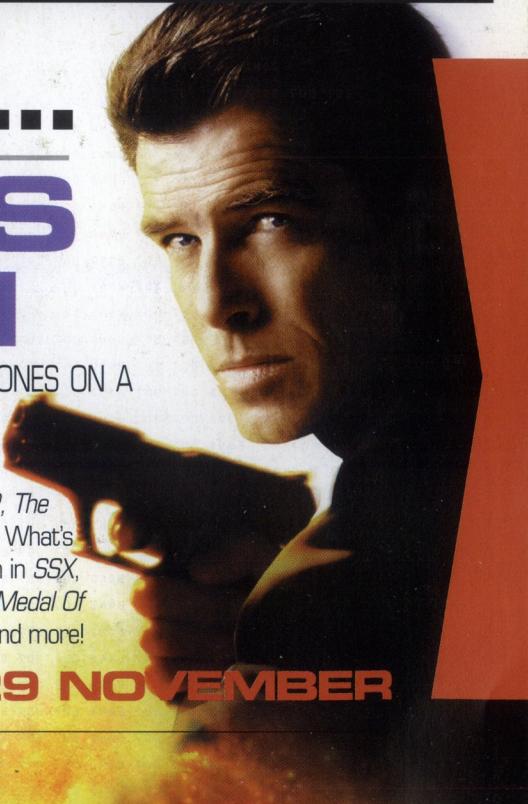
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It seems The Duke's lines don't go down too well with the ladies, after all. Perhaps a few months' training in the gym would have helped? Or a cigar...

NEXT MONTH... THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH

BOND'S MAGNUM OPUS HITS THE PLAYSTATION! JAMES TAKE CHRISTMAS JONES ON A JAUNT ROUND EUROPE AND WE HAVE THE WORLD EXCLUSIVE REVIEW

PLUS! Reviewed! The games you'll find under the tree at Christmas: *WWF Smackdown 2*, *The Mummy*, *ISS*, *007 Racing*, *Crash Bash*, *European Super League*, *The Grinch* and loads more • What's coming your way on PlayStation 2: Kojima's mech warrior neo-classic *Z.O.E.*, snowboard heaven in *SSX*, firework fantasy with *Fantavision* and Konami's new adventure *Shadow Of Memories* • Massive *Medal Of Honour Underground* and *Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2* maps. • The dating game, Tokyo style... • And more!



ISSUE 66 ON SALE WEDNESDAY 29 NOVEMBER

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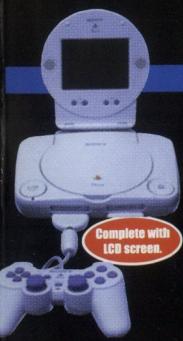
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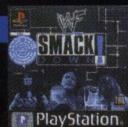
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The winner will get to choose two signed WWF photos from our great collection. There are pictures of The Rock, Kane, X-Pac, Al Snow & Head. Plus, we've also got a signed picture of the gorgeous Debra!

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Entrants must be 16 or over. Calls are likely to last 4 to 8 mins and cost 75p per minute (09067) and £1 per minute (09069). Make sure that you have the billpayer's permission. Most competitions require a tone phone. If a competition is marked INSTANT WIN then you will be told if you are a winner during your call. The Big Five-O has 10 questions worth 1-10 points each and winners must beat a target score. Instant Win competitions have multiple choice questions plus a game to decide if you are an instant winner. Other Competitions involve multiple choice questions with tiebreaker and end on the 30th November 2000, after which they may be replaced by a similar service on the same number. Actual designs may vary. If you would like a copy of the rules or a list of winners' names, see our web site or send a stamped addressed envelope to the address below. If you are an INSTANT winner send your claim, with claim number to: InfoMedia Services Limited 'Claims Dept'. PO Box 28 Northampton NN1 5DS. Helpline: 01 604 624 634

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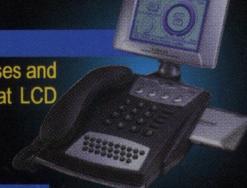
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THE BIG FIVE-O

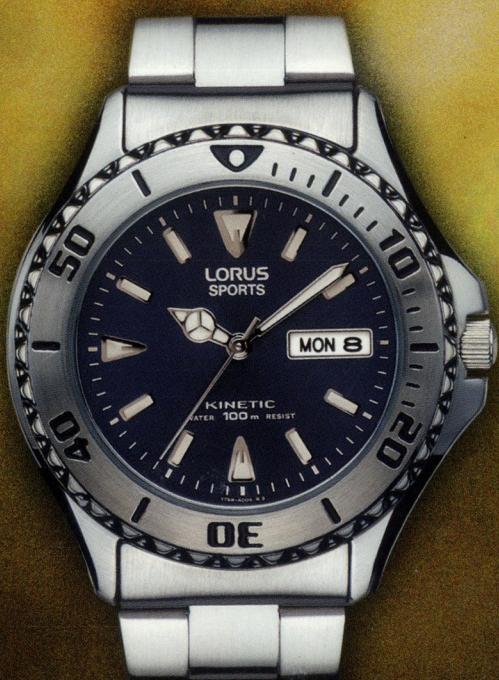
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